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# The Beaver

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## Exploring Canada's History

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# Castorologia and our good name ...

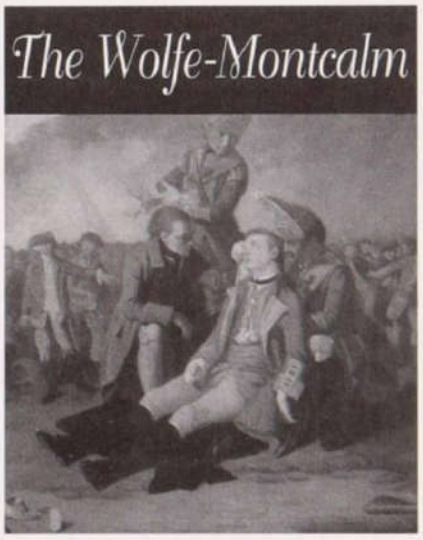
Early in Act 1 of Puccini's opera *La Bohème,* the impoverished artists and writers are preparing for a night out on the town. The poet Rodolfo hangs back. "*Il resto per terminar l'articolo di fondo del Castoro*", he sings.

What he is saying, in rough translation, is this: "I must stay till I've finished my article for *The Beaver*".

The great Puccini was clearly of the opinion that "*The Beaver*" is a perfectly acceptable name for a magazine. A great many Canadians seem to agree with him, as they have indicated emphatically since it was revealed in these columns in October that this magazine was thinking of changing the name it has carried since 1920.

Opposition to the name change was running at almost five to one by mid-December and some subscribers had taken off the gloves. One donor of five gift subscriptions, for example, warned that he would cancel all of them if a name change went through. Another subscriber informed us that he was postponing his renewal and would only proceed if the old title was retained. Others made similar vows. "Cancel my subscription the day you change the name" was a frequent request.

Many stressed the importance of retaining a title of long usage. A student at Thunder Bay seemed to speak for many when she wrote: "Can you stand another letter about why you should not change the name of this beautiful Canadian periodical? Anybody who mistakes this magazine for a *Playboy* spinoff or a journal of rodent biology is either averse to reading subtitles or is simply ignorant. I am a university student who interprets living history at the largest reconstructed fur trade post in the world (Old Fort William). The stacks of *The Beaver* magazine in our library are dog-earred and loosely bound from years of perusing eyes, and you've never let us down. I think my co-workers and I, perhaps more than anyone else, *know* that this wonderful magazine cannot have a more appropriate title. Unique, internationally recognized, concise and, above all else, recognizes and respects Canadian history."




Ted Jones, the poetic Dean of Applied Science and Engineering at the University of Toronto, was moved to verse:

*The title-dropping Editor*
*Is not a cruel predator...*
*But economic giant, dossed*
*With authors who are free of cost.*
*Thus when that erstwhile name,*
*"The Beaver",*
*Was threatened with a stroke of cleaver,*
*The manifested loyalty*
*Rejected any royalty –*
*And rages from so many sages*
*Did spread themselves to seven pages!*
*Such literary crop as this*
*Promoted budgetary bliss!*

M. Burbidge of Princeton, British Columbia, compared the proposed name change to the controversial post-war decision to change the name of Castle Mountain to Mount Eisenhower and noted that the name "Castle Mountain" had eventually been restored because of public demand. A similar fate, it was suggested, awaits any new name given to *The Beaver.*

A number of correspondents added their names to the list of those who feel that too many Canadian traditions are being tampered with or cast aside. The comment of a reader in Cambridge, Ontario, is typical: "The dash to change so much that is uniquely Canadian is very worrisome and it is to be hoped that it will not reach this excellent magazine"

Arnold Greenius of Vancouver made no bones about it: "I have just renewed my subscription to *The Beaver* to March 2000. The day the new publisher turns its back on this Canadian tradition and changes the title of *The Beaver* will be the day I cancel my subscription and ask for a refund. Don't even think of it!"

Brenda Whitlock of Milton, Ontario, was not impressed by most of the proposed titles: "The alternative titles suggested are boring, bland, dull, dreary, depressing, etc. I am astonished that an organization such as Canada's National History Society should even consider throwing out a 75 year old tradition." Meanwhile, Jessie Davidson of Feversham, Ontario, has a practical proposal: "I am moved to consider inaugurating a Save Our Beaver Association."

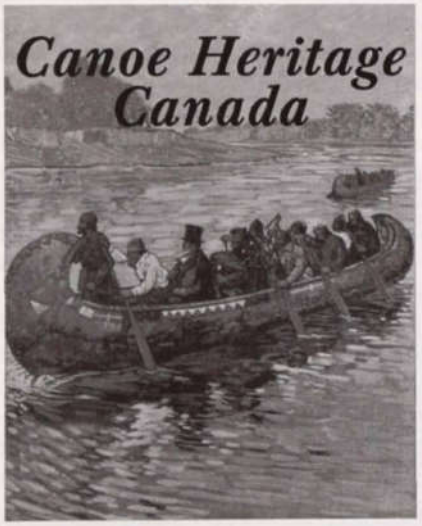
On the other hand, some feel that a change of name is overdue. Susan Thompson, a librarian at Two Harbours, Minnesota, writes: "For God's sake change your name! I've worked in public libraries for several

years and I must have heard every comment there could possibly be about the name '*The Beaver*'. I love your magazine and read it voraciously. Whatever you decide to do, keep up the good work."

Fraser Pelletier of Don Mills, Ontario, who had ancestors on both sides at the Plains of Abraham, feels that *The Wolfe-Montcalm* would be a good title. Of course, we know what happened to them. Besides, is this the moment to re-open old wounds?

J. Bryan Vaughan likes *Canoe Heritage Canada*, while Naomi Katz of Vancouver echoes Evelyn Waugh with *Canada Revisited*. Others have suggested titles such as *Historama*, *The Canadian Historian* and *Canada's History*.

Still, the great majority of letters, faxes and e-mails have urged us to retain the old name. Sherrill Grace, who teaches English at the University of British Columbia, is satisfied: "As a feminist and an English professor (who is fussy about words and terminology), I see no problem with the name. If




some can see or hear an obscenity, then it is they who have a problem. Most importantly, the name is thoroughly Canadian. Don't change."

"You are unique. Keep the unique name!" writes Helen Backhouse of Calgary. Paul J. Willson of Victoria was astonished to hear that we were considering a change: "Change the name of *The Beaver*? Has someone in Manitoba gone mad? This is the one magazine that positively screams out CANADA both here at home and abroad. I was shocked and appalled to see that you'd even float such an idea."

Hugh Henderson wrote from cyberspace: "I noted ... that you are proposing to change the name of the publication. As an historical society, you seem to have lost your sense of history. *The Beaver* is a unique publication with a unique name ... I doubt if I would renew my subscription if you change names".

Don Glover of Brockville, Ontario, was upset by the proposed change, but retained his sense of humour: "So, the slap of the beaver's tail echoes across the pond. Don't you wish you got so much response from every scent you send? Don't castor adrift! Leave our *Beaver* be!"

Virginia Byfield of Edmonton urged us to hold onto our good name: "Keep the *Beaver* name!!!! The magazine is getting better all the time! A wonderful magazine!"

Some, like Kathy Stokes of Winnipeg, were scornful: "Your excuses for a name change are pitiful in their weakness. It sounds as though new management of the magazine is trying to put its own stamp on things right from the start ... Where is your sense of history?" John Shelbourn of Nanaimo, was even more emphatic: "Why are you using your office to destroy a national institution? *Saturday Night*, once described as 'Canada's cultural magazine', has been reformed by the current editorship into a pale imitation of *People* magazine. What is your hidden agenda for *The Beaver*?"

*The Beaver* always gets a lot of renewal mail around Christmas and many renewing subscribers took the opportunity this year to warn against a name change. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" was a *leitmotiv* in mail received throughout December. Some simply wrote "Don't change the name" across the renewal form or used one of our subscription cards to send a firm message. Other correspondents commented on how agreeable it was to read the views of other subscribers. Christine Pike of Waseca, Saskatchewan, felt that the response to our modest proposal was significant: "What a pleasure to meet so many fellow *Beaver* readers through their letters regarding a proposed name change. By and large,

## HISTORAMA

so many were well-written. Hooray for those who spoke up for our traditions and symbols, so badly eroded by 'encouraged apathy' and traitorous politicians! Whose idea was the name change anyway? Who needs it? The people have spoken. May they keep on; for they must. Believe it or not, the future of this country depends on it."

We at *The Beaver* cannot help but agree. It is good and instructive to hear from our readers, even when they take us to task or offer to punch us on the nose, and it is enormously encouraging to know that so many readers feel so strongly about this magazine and its place in the Canadian scheme of things that they are willing to take time to send us their views. Canadian symbols *are* important and it is pleasing to know that many of you feel that this magazine, a part of the Canadian cultural scene for over 75 years, is an important Canadian institution and part of a great Canadian tradition. Thank you for taking the time to tell us so.

We shall not proceed with a change of name at this time. *The Beaver* remains *The Beaver. Semper Castoris.* ◆

# A noble Canadian

*The workhorse of New France gallops into the present*

**By Alison Acker**

His ancestor carried William the Conqueror into battle nearly a thousand years ago. You can recognize him in the Bayeux Tapestry by his long back, the wave in his tail, the crest of his neck, the ideal war horse for a knight at arms. With such a lineage, it is surprising that so few Canadians know anything about our own horse with a history, the Canadian Horse, direct descendant of the French charger.

It was in 1665 that Louis XIV of France sent some horses from his royal stable to Canada, answering the pleas of the new settlers for a horse that could do double duty, strong enough to pull a plough or skid logs, but able to trot 50 miles in a day.

The horses he sent were descendants of the Norman war horse that was big enough to carry a knight-at-arms. By the seventeenth century the war horse had been somewhat refined by a mix of Barb blood. He was prized and he was expensive. In fact, the horses remained the property of the King of France for three years after reaching Canada, although each one was distributed to a *seigneur* who had found favour with the King. When more were bred, they were offered to local farmers who were required to pay 100 *livres* or a colt per year for three years for each horse received. Numbers rose from 145 head in 1679 to more than 5,000 in 1720.

The French settlers lucky enough to get one of Louis XIV's horses found them ideal for clearing land, but on Sundays and holidays they would be trotted in road races. Forced to endure long winters with little to eat, the Canadian became smaller and tougher. This is how *The Home, Farm and Business Cyclopaedia* described him in 1883:

> The forehead is broad, the ears are wide apart and carried well up; the eye is small and clear and has a bold expression; the chest is broad and full; the shoulder is strong ... No race of horses has sounder and more powerful limbs and none can equal the Canadian as to feet – these being tough, hard, iron-like and free from disease even under the most unfavourable circumstances ... Canadians are long-lived, easily-kept and capable of the greatest endurance ... It is nothing uncommon for them to do fifty miles a day for many days in succession.

This was the little black horse that pulled the sleigh in so many of Krieghoff's Quebec paintings, and breeders soon found other uses for him.

The Canadian Horse became popular with the military and the North West Mounted Police. As Colonel Soame Jenyns told the British "Lords' Committee on Horse Supply", the "Canadians made first-rate troop-horses, very fairly bred, capital hacks, a little straight in the shoulder, which is of course objectionable, but wonderfully good

*Eno is the sire of a flourishing herd on Vancouver Island.*

sound horses, admirable animals." This is how William Francis Butler described his Canadian horse, Blackie, in *The Great Lone Land*, published in London in 1872:

> My horse was a wonderful animal; day by day I feared that his game little limbs were growing weary, and that soon he must give out. But not a bit of it; his black coat roughened, his flanks grew thinner, but still he went gamely on. When I dismounted, to save him and let his companions go on before, he never rested until I mounted again, and then he trotted briskly on until he regained them. ... On the fourth of November we rode over sixty miles, and when we camped in the lee of a little clump of bare willows, Blackie and his comrades went out to shiver through their supper on the cold, snow-covered prairie, the bleakest scene my eyes had ever looked upon.

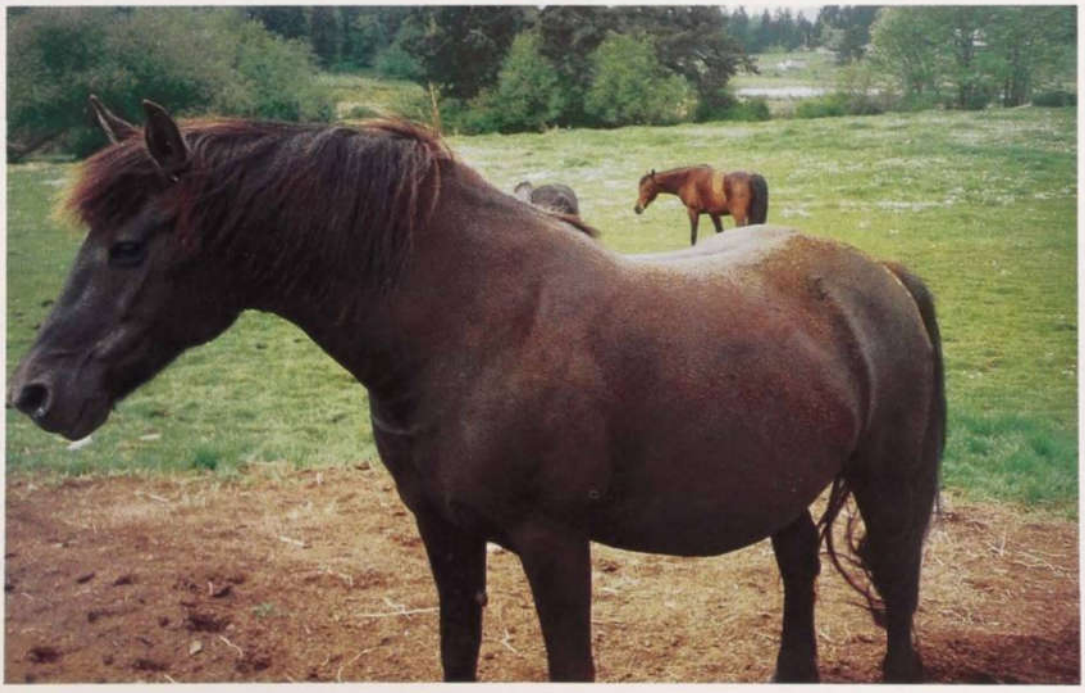
Butler tells of the sad end of Blackie when he plunged through the ice while crossing the Assiniboine River:

> The horse kept swimming stoutly round, trying all he could to get upon the ice. All his efforts were useless ... Never shall I forget how the poor brute looked at me. I rushed back to the camp where my rifle lay and back to the spot where the poor beast still struggled with his fate. As I raised the rifle, he looked so imploring that my hand trembled; another moment and the ball crashed through his head. With one look, never to be forgotten, poor Blackie went down under the cold ice. I went back to camp, sat down in the snow and cried like a child.

*1066 and all that: an ancestor of the Canadian horse is depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry.*

Canadians like Blackie were exported to Britain as carriage horses, cab horses and hunters. They went south to the U.S. as cavalry mounts and draft horses during the American Civil War and then to South Africa during the Boer War. Some say they can see the stamp of the Canadian horse in the Morgan Horse of the U.S. which is also famous for its versatility and endurance.

There was so much cross-breeding to fulfill the



*A Canadian mare in foal, Vancouver Island.*

*A Canadian pulls the sleigh in Krieghoff's "The River Road" (1855). National Gallery of Canada.*

various demands that numbers of pure-bred Canadians shrank from around 5,000 in 1720 to less than 1,000 by 1909. Although a breed registry had been established in 1886, Dr. J.G. Rutherford, Canada's veterinary director general and livestock commissioner, declared in 1909 it was hopeless to attempt to restore the breed to its original condition.

On 19 March 1909, the Canadian Horse was declared by Parliament to be the national breed of Canada. In 1912, the Canadian government established a breeding farm at Cap-Rouge, near Quebec City, and Canadian Horse Breeding Syndicates were established in 1932. But horse breeders were fighting the advent of the tractor.

The Second World War closed the federal program, though in 1940 the Quebec government rebuilt the experimental farm in Deschambault, on a smaller scale. There were barely 400 horses left by 1981, when that program closed and the herd was auctioned off.

But a few Canadians still pulled milk carts or skidded logs and the horse lived on in the memory of many farmers. Twenty serious breeders from Ontario and Quebec formed the Upper Canada branch of the Canadian Horse Society in 1988. Soon Don Prosperine had 10 of them on his farm south of Ottawa and his son, Frank, had 16.

*A herd in the home province of Quebec.*

Quebec breeders were fearful that outsiders would not preserve the original characteristics of the Canadian Horse and they are still not happy to let go of the best specimens. But in the last decade, Canadians have flourished. They have appeared on a Canadian stamp and been featured breed at the National Horse Show in Toronto and at Spruce Meadows in Alberta, being shown in barrel racing, driving, jumping, even in dressage. Canadians were chosen to pull the carriages and wagons at Upper Canada Village near Morrisburg, Ontario. They have begun to be in demand as an all-purpose horse that a child could ride, but one that a farmer could use, too, and one that could live outside and eat thistles if it had to.

In 1996, Dan Wilson of Woodmount Farm, in Yellow Point, Vancouver Island, went back to Quebec to buy enough stock to start breeding Canadians, which he had fallen in love with as a boy back East.

"I like the way they move – and the way they keep," he says. "And I was determined to start breeding them out here on the coast, because they're a part of Canadian history. I had quite a time getting them to part with good breeding stock in Quebec, but I was able to talk to some of the old-timers and they saw I was serious about these horses and what I could do to keep the breed pure. I saw a lot of Canadians of all shapes and sizes and colours but very few of the old type, pure black with a good crest and wavy tail. So I had to talk hard to get a good stud, a colt and a couple of brood mares. Now here they are, all black as black can be and big. My stud, Eno, stands more than 15 hands tall and isn't he a beauty!"

Wilson went back to Quebec in the fall of 1996 to buy another young stallion and a couple of fillies. He has sold the colt for $5,000 and has reserves on the next of his mare Sarah's offspring before it is born. And now he and some neighbours have formed the Canadian Horse Association of British Columbia.

Wilson's Canadians run at liberty on his 50-acre ranch on the shores of Michael Lake. His partner, Richard West, is planning to train some of them for harness. "It will be like the old days, in Quebec. We even speak to them in French, and they mind what you're saying."

"I guess these horses say something about the Canadian character: we're tough, but we're gentle. They make a good symbol, don't they?" ◆

*Writer Alison Acker lives in Victoria, British Columbia.*

# What makes Maxie run?

## *A future British press baron strikes it rich in the 'Laurier Boom'*

Lord Beaverbrook. More than three decades after his death his name continues to evoke the very image of power and wealth. From his entry into the British House of Commons in 1910, Max Aitken would capture the English imagination as a social and political phenomenon without precedent. His immense wealth, his rapid ascension to the peerage, his scandalous affairs, his political mischief-making, and his control over the *Express* family of newspapers both attracted and repelled some of the most talented writers of his era including H.G. Wells, Evelyn Waugh, Arnold Bennett and Rebecca West. If his place within British society and politics was controversial during his life, his place within Canadian history remains a rather distasteful footnote as a financial buccaneer who masterminded three immense industrial mergers and then fled to Britain a millionaire.

*His failures behind him, young Max Aitken contemplates a future of great expectations.*

In reality, Max Aitken was very much a product of his times, one of a generation of young lions who made their fortunes during the most optimistic period of Canadian history, the late Laurier boom. When Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier first proclaimed in a speech that the twentieth century would belong to Canada, those applauding hoped the sentiment would come true. With every passing year in the new century, however, more and more became believers, for Canada was indeed growing faster than any other nation including the United States, a feat never again achieved in this century. The growth was propelled by large-scale immigration, Western agricultural expansion, new and vast enterprises manufacturing steel, cement, pulp and paper, an unparalleled investment in railways as well as residential and commercial construction, and making it all possible, an immense inflow of portfolio capital from Britain. Directing this investment was a group of aggressive and young securities salesmen who, within only a few years, worked their way up to high-flying financiers. A modern parallel might be a group of suburban real-estate salesmen suddenly becoming international real-estate developers like the Reichmann Brothers of Olympia and York. In other words, Max Aitken was only one of a number of twentysomethings who were rising to the pinnacle of Canadian finance during the Laurier boom, which ended on a flourish with the great merger wave of 1909-1913.

Born in 1879, the first year of John A. Macdonald's National Policy, William Maxwell Aitken was raised in the small town of Newcastle on the banks of the Miramichi River in the sticks of northern New Brunswick. Wedged in the middle of a large family headed by a rather absent-minded Presbyterian minister and his busy wife, he grew up craving attention. Although he did very well in school in his early years, Max became increasingly restless and impish as he entered his teens, and by the age of 16 had decided to leave school altogether. Despite the difference in their ages, his closest friend at the time was R.B. Bennett, a schoolteacher just turned lawyer working in L.J. Tweedie's law firm in Chatham, directly across the river from Newcastle. Bennett pulled strings to get his young friend a job as a clerk in the firm. Typing up documents, deeds, and letters from morning until night, Max only put up with the drudgery to be close to his mentor and hero who he was convinced would become Prime Minister of Canada

**By Gregory P. Marchildon**

*The young businessman, second from right, with R.B. Bennett beside him in bowler hat and wing collar, and Izaak Walton Killam on his left, poses jauntily.*

some day. Depression was all he felt when, months later, Bennett told him that he was leaving Tweedie and New Brunswick in order to become a partner in Senator James Lougheed's thriving practice in far-away Calgary. He was also soon out of a job. Never satisfied with Aitken's work, Tweedie replaced him the moment he found a more promising clerk.

At loose ends, Max wandered off to Halifax where he failed to pass the entrance examination for Dalhousie University and to Saint John where he began to peddle life insurance. Soon spending too much time drinking and gambling with the other travelling salesmen and too little with potential buyers, he found himself in debt and restless to boot. By the spring of 1898, Max had begged and borrowed enough money to take the Canadian Pacific train west all the way to Calgary where he intended to ask Bennett for an articling position. Bennett refused, convinced as he was that his young friend not only lacked focus but was becoming entirely irresponsible. Without enough money to return east, Aitken found a slightly more flush partner and set up a bowling alley in Calgary. The business did well, and he soon traded it in for a stationery and tobacco store. Months later, he sold that business and took his small profit to Edmonton where he became a food provisioner for the large railway crews laying down new track throughout the Northwest. When bad weather spoiled his large supply of meat, however, most of which he had purchased on borrowed money, Max found himself bankrupt and desperate to get away from his creditors.

It was early autumn of 1898. Max was 19 and the Boer War had just begun. He agreed to meet one of his brothers in Quebec and enlist, leaving his failures behind for glory in South Africa. Afflicted by asthma since childhood, he was rejected for service, and then subjected to the humiliation of seeing his brother and the other "lucky" volunteers sail away without him. So it was back to Saint John and the mundane business of selling insurance. But something was changing. Depressed with how little he had accomplished, he no longer found solace in cavorting with the other salesmen. He decided to stop blaming others for his problems. He would make something of himself.

He hired a reluctant Bennett to help him settle some of his outstanding debts in the West. He began to pay more attention to his business as he travelled through the Maritimes peddling insurance. While in Halifax, he met and cultivated a friendship with William B. Ross, a prominent lawyer-promoter who was involved in numerous utility and railway enterprises. Ross had just floated the Dominion Iron and Steel Company, one of the largest industrial companies in the country, and was promoting new utility ventures in Latin America and the Caribbean. Ross told Max how he could get a small block of Sao Paulo Tramway, Light and Power bonds from a Montreal broker and sell them on commission. Max saw that if he could make enough money in commissions, he could reinvest his earnings in larger blocks of securities at a slightly lower price, thereby increasing his "spread" or profit. The larger the block, the greater the spread.

Max realized, however, that it would take years of commission work to save up enough capital to purchase the large blocks necessary to make a real killing, much less to get in on the ground floor of any new company issue. Impatient, he decided instead to apprentice under a promoter already at the top of the financial pyramid. William B. Ross was close to the top, but John F. Stairs, the scion of a long-established Halifax merchant family, was not only Halifax's premier financier but well known throughout the Dominion for his abilities as a company promoter. Many conflicting and probably apocryphal stories have been passed down over the years as to how Aitken first met Stairs, but the result is indisputable. Stairs took an instant liking to the young man and, by making him his executive assistant, gave him a first-class introduction to the world of Canadian finance, industry, and society.

Aitken took full advantage of the opportunities which came his way through Stairs. He successfully negotiated a bank merger, he sold the

*Sir Rodolphe Forget: a new industrial landscape.*

shares of Stairs' first Caribbean utility venture, and he helped float millions of dollars worth of shares belonging to Stairs' most important industrial interest, the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company. Desperate to prove himself to his new mentor and slay the dragon of his recent failures, he succeeded in each deal, giving him progressively more confidence in himself, to say nothing of more money in his pocket. Visiting Max for a few days in Halifax in 1902, Reverend Aitken was elated at his prodigal son's transformation, and upon his return to Newcastle he wrote: "You are doing well – that I could plainly see. I sincerely hope that you will go on from prosperity to greater prosperity."

Others were less convinced that any transformation had taken place. Some of J.F. Stairs' friends and associates concluded that Aitken's only skill was at insinuating himself into Stairs' confidence. They shook their heads when Stairs appointed Aitken secretary and general manager of the Royal Securities Corporation, the firm he set up to help Aitken sell futures, bonds and shares. Their concern turned to irritation when Aitken used his new position to call the shots in the various syndicates (of which they were invariably members) set up to underwrite and sell the shares of Stairs' other ventures. And call the shots he did, in a direct and commanding style little tempered by respect for position or seniority. His age, his lack of experience, his eagerness, his toughness, and his influence over Stairs quickly made him some very powerful enemies in Halifax. After Stairs suddenly and unexpectedly died in September of 1904, these enemies moved quickly against Aitken, one even trying to push Aitken out of his position in the funeral procession.

Realizing what he now faced in Halifax without Stairs as a shield, Aitken steered the Royal Securities Company into financing small electric tramway ventures in the Caribbean which he could personally supervise. He then founded the Montreal Engineering Company to service and control his growing family of utility enterprises. By putting its head office in Montreal, he purposely created the conditions to move himself and the Royal Securities Corporation from the personally suffocating atmosphere of Halifax to the more welcoming milieu of Montreal. Finally, he diversified his business interests by setting up a trust company in Halifax which, soon after scoring some remarkable successes in the Maritimes, bought a controlling interest in the old and venerable Montreal Trust and Deposit Company.

By the spring of 1907 Aitken had permanently settled in Montreal with his new wife Gladys, the daughter of Colonel Charles Drury, the first Canadian governor of the military garrison at Halifax. Max was delighted with Montreal. Certainly Gladys, at the impressionable age of 20, found a glittering social scene with a variety and richness unrivalled in Canada and certainly a universe removed from stuffy Halifax. High society was, after all, built on wealth, and Montreal was the undisputed industrial and financial centre of Canada. For Max, it was the only place to be. "I find there is more of interest in Montreal in a few days", he wrote a Maritime friend, "than in many weeks of Halifax life." The city had a cosmopolitan flavour utterly lacking in centres such as Toronto and Halifax. Most important, there seemed room here for young and ambitious outsiders. From his Royal Securities' head office on St. James Street where he worked in the early morning, to his lofty office on Place d'Armes, where he spent the rest of the day managing Montreal Trust, he wondered why he had spent so long "trying to do business from Halifax".

*Historic moment: A 1920 cartoon depicts Max leaving Calgary in 1898 to seek his fortune "back East".*

In making the adjustment to Montreal, Aitken had some very powerful help. Sir Edward Clouston, the general manager and vice-president of the Bank of Montreal, as well as Sir William Van Horne of Canadian Pacific Railway fame, had been associated with some of Aitken's ventures for a couple of years. Both greatly

respected his financial acumen. Indeed, the moment Van Horne learned of Aitken's decision to move, he sent a letter of welcome to Aitken in Halifax, expressing his pleasure "at the prospect of having you here in Montreal" and immediately invited Max and Gladys to join his lunch group every Sunday, a gathering of the city's who's who. Clouston was even closer, becoming one of Aitken's largest shareholders in virtually all of the ventures he launched from Montreal. These included the huge industrial mergers which Aitken began to assemble at the very beginning of the merger wave of 1909-1913, a frenzy of consolidations that would permanently change the industrial landscape of the country. In Montreal with Aitken were promoters such as E.B. Greenshields, Clarence McCuaig, Rodolphe Forget, J.W. McConnell, Arthur J. Nesbitt, and Charles H. Cahan, while E.R. Wood, Sir Henry Pellatt, Cawthra Mulock, William Mackenzie and Donald Mann took care of this new business from Toronto.

An amalgamation of 12 cement plants, Aitken's Canada Cement Company was one of the first to trigger the merger wave. Measured in terms of new securities issued, it was also the largest flotation of the Laurier boom and consequently attracted the greatest attention. Clouston was a secret member of Canada Cement's underwriting syndicate, and the Bank of Montreal acted as the syndicate's banker. Still floating Canada Cement in Britain, Aitken along with the help of his wealthy Montreal friends including Clouston, then floated the Canadian Car & Foundry Company, merging three of the largest and most modern rolling stock manufacturers in the country. Finally, in the spring and early summer of 1910, he introduced investors on both sides of the Atlantic to the Steel Company of Canada, the most profitable merger of all for Aitken and his close circle of friends. Celebrated as a financial Napoleon by the *Busy Man's Magazine* (soon to be renamed *Maclean's*), he was said to possess the kind of courage, confidence, and financial *sang-froid* "that at once carries him half way to victory."

*Sir Edward Clouston and his quarters at the Bank of Montreal, part of the splendid world to which Max was admitted.*

Aitken was also gaining notoriety with fame. Most of his initial detractors were business associates who felt they had been taken advantage of in Aitken's deals. The Canada Cement merger made him known and disliked by a much larger group. The company's enormous capitalization – including over $13 million in common stock much of which ended up in the hands of Aitken and his friends – and its presumed monopoly over the production and distribution of cement, provoked some of the public and press from the beginning. The newly proclaimed "financial wizard" of St. James Street was also becoming known as the ultimate manipulator, a high financier who stripped the assets of perfectly good firms and then created monopolies from their carcasses. This perception became *de rigueur* when one of Canada's most respected citizens, Sir Sandford Fleming, called for a public investigation into Aitken's promotion of Canada Cement in the spring of 1911. The accusations, though never proven and wildly off the mark in terms of the profit he alleged Aitken had "stolen", were taken very seriously by the public. Fleming was, after all, the president and chief shareholder of two of the firms entering the merger and was honorary president of the merger company itself. Sir Sandford had also been the engineering genius behind the Canadian Pacific Railway, the inventor of Standard Time, all in all one of the most celebrated Canadians of the day. Aitken on the other hand had seemingly come from nowhere, a shady financier incapable of defending his enormous profits. Friends who had kept their personal investment in mergers such as Canada Cement secret, Sir Edward Clouston most notably, were not obligated to defend Aitken's mergers or their own profits.

By the time that Sir Sandford had publicly laid his complaints against the Canada Cement merger, Aitken was already in England, having moved there in the summer of 1910 to sell his merger securities. With his talented employee, Izaak Walton Killam, he had set up an office in the heart of London's financial district. Then, in

*Three Musketeers: Max Aitken the rising tycoon, left, his business associate Izaak Walton Killam, far left, and, below, the future Prime Minister of Canada, R.B. Bennett.*

a decision which shocked many of his old associates in Canada, he stayed with Gladys in England, plunging into British politics in the snap election of December 1910. Even more surprising, he was able to win a seat in Ashton-under-Lyne, near Manchester, in what had formerly been free trade country, and entered the House of Commons as a Conservative MP.

Years before, Aitken had listened to R.B. Bennett and J.F. Stairs speak glowingly of the notion of an imperial federation glued together by tariffs protecting the empire from new powers such as Germany and the United States. Eventually, he became a true believer, fearful in particular of Canada falling into the economic and political grasp of Uncle Sam. As Canada began to slide towards its own date with destiny in the 1911 reciprocity election, Aitken was repeatedly asked by the leader of the Canadian Conservative Opposition, Robert Borden, to lead his anti-reciprocity campaign in the Maritime provinces. Although Borden did not withdraw his offer immediately after Sir Sandford Fleming went public, the notion of Aitken returning as a candidate died the moment that Aitken's knighthood (for services rendered to Britain's Conservatives) was announced and the Liberal press attacked Aitken without restraint, grinding his reputation into the ground in the process. Instead, Aitken had to be satisfied with contributing to the campaign from afar, giving money to Conservative candidates and funding *The Canadian Century*, an ardent anti-reciprocity magazine. Aitken sailed to Canada for a victory celebration when Borden's Conservatives defeated the Laurier Liberals, but, in the face of continuing bad press, he decided to keep as low a profile as possible. From this time until he was buried in Newcastle, Aitken (Beaverbrook) only returned to Canada to visit.

The rest is, as they say, history. From Max Aitken to Lord Beaverbrook, from merger promoter to newspaper baron, and from Canada to England, he would make of his life a complex tapestry. The picture changed over time, but Beaverbrook's fabric of choice was the same coarse material he had worked with growing up in Canada, and his colours remained the flamboyant and optimistic hues of the late Laurier boom. In a sense, Aitken was both a product and a prodigy of these magic years when everything seemed possible. The country would grow up, accept new realities, but he stubbornly refused. And while his old friends and associates like R.B. Bennett and Robert Borden saw their dreams of imperial federation die on the battlefields of Passchendaele and Vimy Ridge, Beaverbrook would continue to argue for a protectionist Empire for decades after the First World War. ◆

*Gregory P. Marchildon's book "Profits and Politics: Beaverbrook and the Gilded Age of Canadian Finance" was published in November 1996 by the University of Toronto Press. A former teacher of Canadian Studies and Economic History at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Marchildon is currently Deputy Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs, Province of Saskatchewan.*

*Frontenac: From the mouths of my cannons...*

# In Loyalist Ontario: A Schoolboy's Recollections, 1930-1933

By P.B. Waite

In the early 1930s in Belleville, Ontario, in Junior and Senior III, and Junior IV (Grades 5, 6, and 7), we used to open our bright red Ontario School Readers with a certain puzzlement. It was not so much the full-colour Union Jack as frontispiece, though we had memories of a Red Ensign that seemed more Canadian; no, what was strange to us was the rubric underneath the flag: "One Flag, One Fleet, One Throne." What did that mean? No one seemed to know; the teacher when asked seemed embarrassed, saying she personally knew nothing about it or why it should be there. For it wasn't true that there was only one Flag; we had seen another mostly red with an edition of the Union Jack in one corner and some sort of Canadian collectivity in the other. We didn't know anything, either, about one Fleet; we didn't think that Canada was now included in the orbit of the British fleet, and we had heard nothing about a Canadian one. As for the Throne, well, yes, there was George V on our Canadian stamps, gazing benignly out at his Canadian subjects whom he hadn't seen since his 1901 visit as Duke of York. But he was a long way away. Thus our introduction to literature in the public schools of Ontario began with paradoxes.

What was inside the Red Readers was a mix: English poetry and ballads, Canadian stories including one from Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush*, and the odd Canadian poem, the last standing out sharply, its lines evocative of the life and living that we knew around Belleville:

*Along the line of smoky hills*
*The crimson forest stands,*
*And all the day the bluejay calls*
*Throughout the autumn lands.*

That was Wilfred Campbell's 1888 poem about the Ontario fall. We might have been impressed with more Canadian poetry, Archibald Lampman's evocative sonnets, his "Late November" for example:

*Fast drives the snow, and no man comes this way;*
*The hills grow wintry white...*

or E.J. Pratt's thundering pentameter of 1932, "The 6000", about a great locomotive roaring through a prairie storm,

*Out to the spaces–there to toss*
*The blizzard from his path across*
*The prairies of Saskatchewan.*

But that was too soon for the Ontario Readers, and pity it was.

With history we were much more decidedly Canadian. Oh, we learned about King Alfred and the burnt cakes, William the Conqueror and Harold (the Saxon King) to say nothing of King John (the bad King) and Magna Carta, as well as something of the fate of Charles I. Canadian history cut in with the discovery of North America, beginning with Columbus and Cabot of course, and then coming on to Cartier and Champlain. There was the odd reference to American history, to the

***Wolfe meets Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham and a schoolboy changes sides. Illustrations from the C.W. Jefferys Collection, National Archives of Canada.***

*Mayflower* for example, but by that time we were already becoming Canadians.

Or to put it accurately, *Canadiens*. We mapped the voyages of Champlain, of La Salle; we struggled fearfully through the wars with the Iroquois, delighting in the story of Madeleine de Verchères defending her world in 1692 by pretending her little seigneurial fort was fully manned. We were with Frontenac at the Castle St. Louis in Quebec, defending Canada from the Americans under a wicked and predatory Sir William Phips. We rejoiced in the story of Phips' demand in October 1690 for the immediate surrender of Quebec; how the British-American envoy was brought, blindfolded, into the glittering presence of Frontenac and his officers, and Frontenac's reply to the envoy, "*Je n'ai nul réponse à vous faire autre que des bouches de mes canons...*" Thus did we English-*Canadiens* fight the Americans and their British allies. And we continued to be *Canadiens*, rejoicing in the exploits of the voyageurs, their ingenious ways with canoes and rivers. No one told us about paddling songs. A pity that; had it been possible to present us with "*Youpe! Youpe! sur la rivière*" we would have been ecstatic. We managed without the songs; instead the excitement came off the printed page and even more from one bright young (and pretty) female teacher whom we adored.

Then suddenly, oddly, sharply, we became English. It was something of a wrench. Wolfe had laid siege to Quebec in the summer of 1759 and all that summer we stayed with Montcalm fighting off the British. Then, early on the morning of 13 September 1759, we changed sides. We crossed the St. Lawrence with Wolfe and the British in the dark, silent boats, we fought with the British regulars on the Plains of Abraham; and though we mourned both Montcalm and Wolfe, by the time of Montcalm's death the next morning we were already on our way at last to being English-Canadians.

Echoes of our early *Canadien* history continued with us, though; when we read *Maria Chapdelaine* several years later in high school (in my case that was in New Brunswick), it was with some appreciation, knowing whence came Maria's "voices".

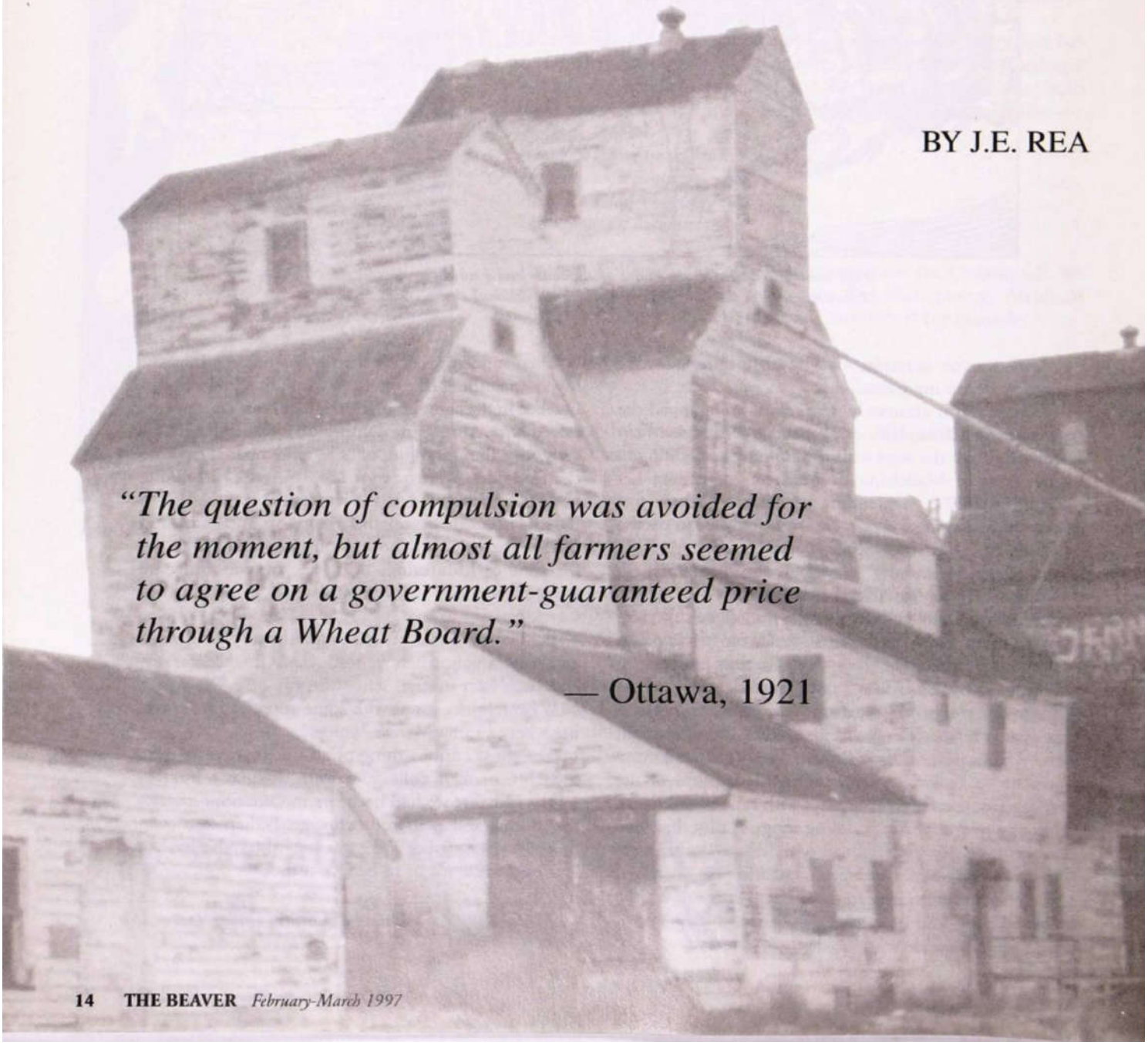
The most curious thing of all was that, years later, French-Canadian colleagues were singularly puzzled by the fact that we had been, we in Ontario, *Canadien* for so long and at so young an age. Perhaps our *volte-face* of 13 September 1759 was not wholly believable. It took a while for us to believe it too. ◆

*P.B. Waite is Professor Emeritus of Canadian History, Dalhousie University, Halifax.*

*The long battle for a fair price*

# THE WHEAT BOARD & THE WESTERN FARMER

BY J.E. REA



*"The question of compulsion was avoided for the moment, but almost all farmers seemed to agree on a government-guaranteed price through a Wheat Board."*

— Ottawa, 1921

There is probably no more familiar symbol of the Canadian West than a Wheat Pool grain elevator, standing like a slope-shouldered sentinel etched against that panoramic prairie sky. A solid, comforting, organic presence; it is almost impossible, if not indeed profane, to separate grain growers from the Pools. The three provincial Wheat Pools epitomize the spirit of self-reliance, of co-operation, of Western resolution, of the spit-in-your-eye determination of "next year country". They were *sui generis*; the self-created weapons with which to battle "the interests", which beset the farmers on all sides.

Does this seem to be laying it on too thick? There is little doubt that such a description would make Pool members and their supporters feel warm and fuzzy as they nodded their heads in agreement. But is it all true? Were the Pools the invariably successful defenders of the grain growers' interests? Were the Wheat Pools always right?

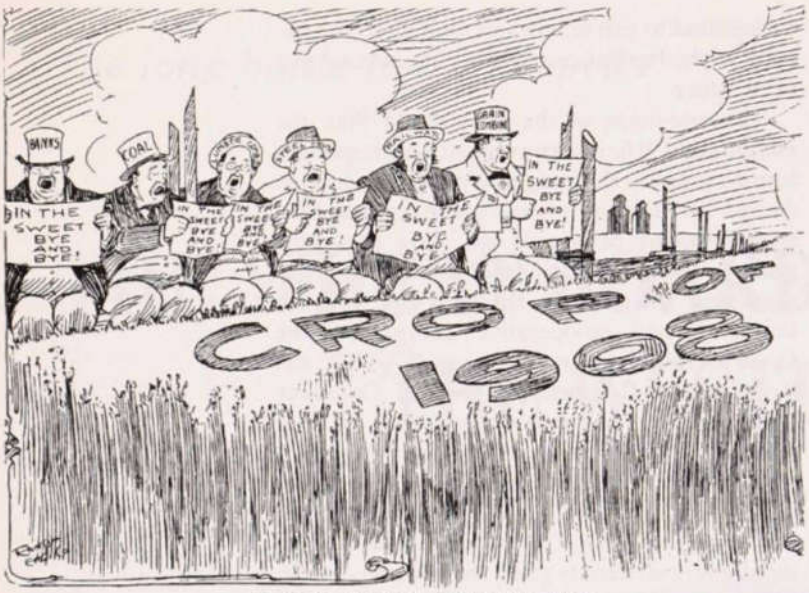
To be fair to the Pools, their record should not be judged as an uninterrupted, sustained evolution. There was a traumatic failure in 1930 when the Pools were obliged to abandon independent marketing, at great cost in both money and esteem, and thereafter continued their more traditional activities as producer and consumer co-operatives with considerable success. These two discrete periods of Pool history – the years from 1924 to 1935, and then the subsequent experience – ought to be recognized as just that, two distinct phases in the life of the institution. It is the early years that I propose to examine here – exciting, turbulent, hopeful, even foolhardy – for it was then that the Pool movement tested the limits of its potential. There are several aspects to this story; the background reasons for the emergence of the Pool movement, the divisions among prairie grain growers after the First World War, a brief and not very successful political diversion, the exciting first years of the Pools, and lastly the implications of the failure of 1930. A related question, seldom if ever asked in this context, was the effect of the failure of the Pools on the traditional political economy of Canada.

The pooling movement in Western Canada was not exclusively economic; it was ideological as well, made that way largely by force of circumstance, but once established, self-justifying. It was not simply that the method of marketing grain in Western Canada was utterly changed by the failure of the Pools; but also that Canadian politics would never be the same again. When the Pools collapsed at the onset of the Great Depression, it was much more than their scheme for co-operative marketing that disappeared; so also did their traditional independence and so also did that staple of Canadian politics, the protective tariff. The background to that failure and, indeed, to the creation of the Pools themselves are an essential part of the story.

The mid-point of the First World War, the autumn of 1916, is a convenient and important turning point in the history of prairie agriculture. Almost all Western wheat farmers at that time were members of one of the three provincial grain growers' associations and many of them marketed their grain through one of the farmer owned co-operative companies, the Grain Growers' Grain Company (GGGC), the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company (SCEC) or the Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company (ACEC). The provincial associations served several purposes, the most important of which were as political pressure groups operating at the provincial level persuading governments, usually very effectively given the political demography, to act in their interests; and as educational agencies, providing the members with technical information, social support and political advice. All three associations received significant financial support for their educational programmes from the GGGC, as did their newspaper, *The Grain Growers' Guide*. The three associations, in turn, were members of the Canadian Council of Agriculture (CCA), a national lobby group pressing the federal government to lower farmers' production costs, most importantly by reducing the protective tariff, which, the farmers argued, unfairly penalized them by inflating the costs of their necessities to the advantage of central Canadian manufacturers. They were obliged to sell their wheat in an uncontrollable world market and thus, they proclaimed loudly, they were opposed to all special consideration and government subsidies. The Farmers' Platform, issued in 1916 and endorsed by all the farmers' groups, was a quasi-political programme having reduced tariffs as its central feature.

Hence the political thrust of the organized farmers at the time of the First World War was to improve their economic condition by lowering their production costs. With the Conservatives committed to protection, their hopes lay with the Liberal Party, traditionally the proponents of free trade. When in power, however, Liberals seemed much less keen on actually doing anything about the tariff. Consequently, there was growing sympathy among grain growers for independent political action, presumably through a new party of their own.

Thomas A. Crerar, the president of the Winnipeg-based GGGC, which marketed the grain of most Manitoba farmers, many in Alberta and slightly fewer in Saskatchewan, was urging the SCEC and the ACEC to merge into one




IN THIS WHEAT BYE AND BYE
After singing which "let us prey"—on the producer

*"The interests" were pointedly identified in this cartoon from "The Grain Growers' Guide".*

marketing agency serving all prairie grain growers who wished to participate. The Albertans were willing enough. In Saskatchewan, however, which produced over half the prairie wheat crop, local particularism was strong and Sask Co-op rejected the overture. Undaunted, the GGGC and the ACEC went ahead anyway and in 1917 created United Grain Growers (UGG), a farmer-owned, producer and consumer co-op with its own large system of elevators and successful and proven marketing facilities. But the First World War disrupted this process of consolidation and brought radical change to the Canadian wheat belt.

In December 1916 the Canadian government, using its wartime emergency powers, confiscated all the wheat remaining in storage. The open market could not survive such a blow and the Winnipeg Grain Exchange suspended futures trading a few months later. Indeed there had been little choice, since Ottawa's hand had been forced by Great Britain. Lack of shipping and the threat posed by submarines had effectively ended Australian and Argentinean wheat exports to Europe. Prices at the beginning of the war hovered around 80 cents a bushel but began to escalate sharply in 1916. By June the price was $1.09 and it reached $1.98 by November. However this might delight North American producers, the British government became thoroughly alarmed and reacted swiftly. A Royal Commission recommended centralized purchasing to stabilize the price. The private grain trade in Britain was shut down and the Commission quickly became the purchasing agent for all grain imported to Britain, France, Italy and the smaller allied countries. As one would expect, the open market collapsed in Canada and in the United States as well. With only one major purchaser in the field, it meant that North American supplies would have to be co-ordinated. In September 1917, a fixed price of $2.21/bushel was agreed upon by Canada, the United States and Britain. Despite some wartime inflationary pressure, prairie wheat growers could not have been unhappy with nearly triple the pre-war price. In addition, the government was not only guaranteeing this price and a market, but encouraging them to increase production. The need to reduce costs as a means of maximizing income slipped into the background. A Board of Grain Supervisors, which included Crerar of UGG, exercised control of the industry on behalf of the government until its mandate under the War Measures Act expired in the summer of 1919.

The Union Government of Sir Robert Borden assumed that the emergency marketing arrangements of the war would end and the open market would be quickly re-established; indeed the private grain dealers were anxiously urging its resumption. Opinion among grain growers, however, was decidedly mixed. The Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association annual convention passed resolutions in 1919 asking the federal government to set a fixed minimum price for wheat and to establish and maintain a central selling agency. The Alberta and Manitoba Associations, however, declined to endorse these recommendations.

All wheat farmers had enjoyed the artificially high prices of the war. Many attributed their good fortune to the government guarantee and central selling. Many others, however, including UGG, saw difficulties in the Saskatchewan proposal. European customers would certainly expect prices to decline, especially with the return of Australia and Argentina to the market. Hence to maintain a fixed price anywhere close to that paid for the 1918 crop could cost the federal treasury up to 100 million dollars. Since the American Congress was already committed to some sort of price maintenance system, it was a perplexing situation.

But there were other difficulties as well. If the government guaranteed a minimum price for wheat, why not for copper, or pulpwood, or cod fish or any other commodity? What was so special about wheat? And lastly, a guaranteed price would constitute a special consideration to grain growers, thus violating the very principle that the organized farmers had been contending for over the preceding 10 years. It would be no different, in practice or in principle, than the tariff which protected manufacturers. Yet, understandably, the experience of the war had predisposed many

producers toward the security of government controlled pricing and marketing. On the other hand few politicians at that time, either Liberal or Conservative, believed the government of Canada should be in the wheat business.

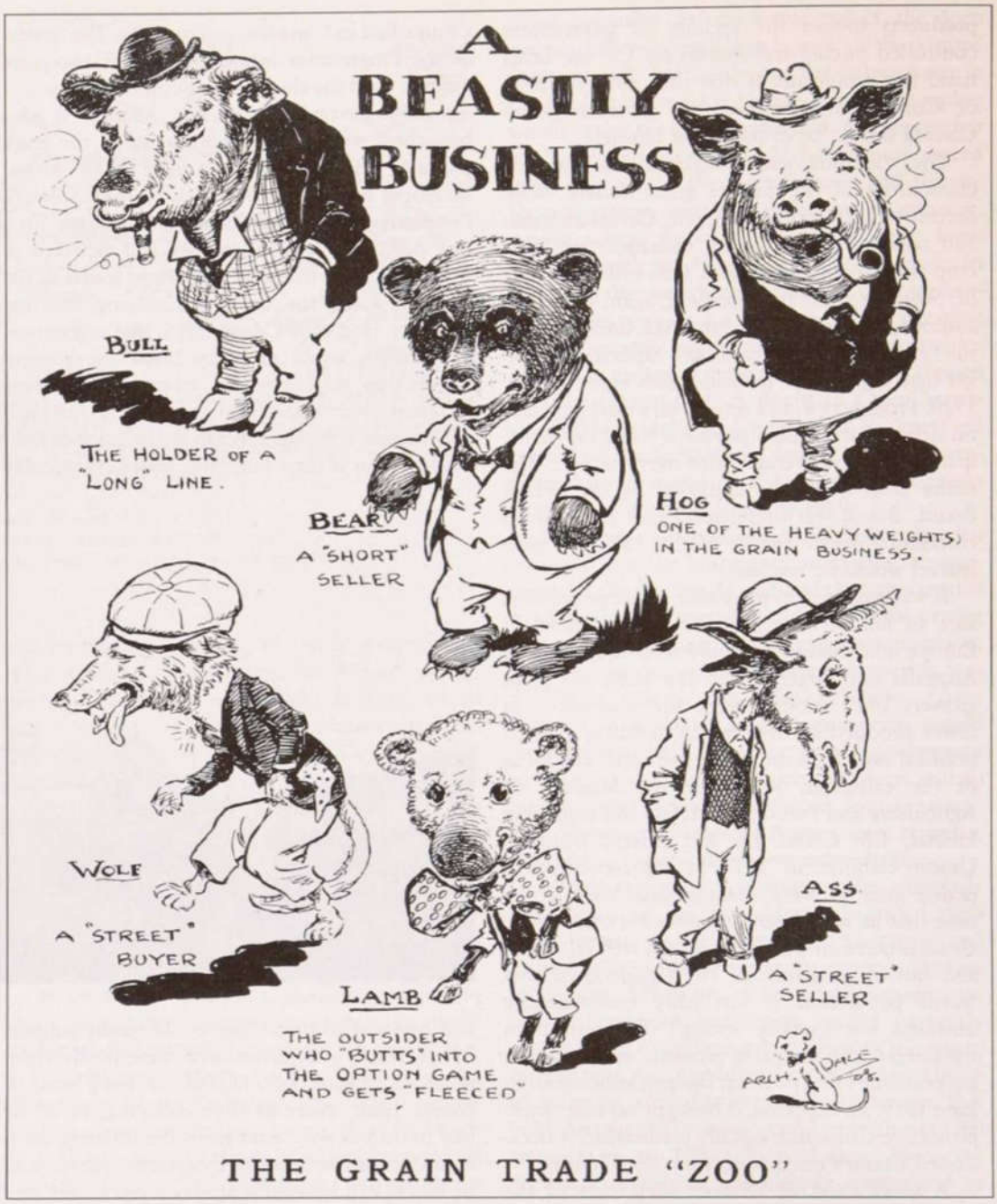
The dilemma was postponed, despite the clamouring of the private grain traders. With decontrol in Europe incomplete, Canadian banks and railways were reluctant to handle the 1919 crop without the security of firm orders coming in. So as a temporary expedient, again under the authority of the War Measures Act, Ottawa set up the first Canadian Wheat Board explicitly to market that year's crop. It would then expire in July 1920. Producers would receive an initial payment on delivery and a final payment based on participation and the average price over the year. The entire crop would be marketed by the Wheat Board. But it was understood that this was an emergency device and in August 1920 the open market would be restored.

It was apparent to most that wheat prices were sure to fall as a consequence of decontrol in Europe and expanded supply with the return of Australia and Argentina to the trade. So grain growers once more sought the alternative of lower production costs which meant a revived political assault on the protective tariff. The focus of the campaign would be the Minister of Agriculture and President of UGG and sometime Liberal, T.A. Crerar. He had entered Borden's Union Cabinet in 1917 as representative of prairie grain growers, making quite clear at the time that he would not renounce his convictions about protection. His position was well known in and out of government. He had declared that "tariff protection is not only economically unsound but morally wrong". The test, both for Crerar and the grain growers, would be the government's first post-war budget, announced in June 1919. As expected, it brought no relief from protective tariffs and, equally predictable, it occasioned Crerar's resignation from the Cabinet.

A small band of Western supporters of the government followed Crerar to the cross-benches. Dubbed the Progressive Party, they sought to rally the agrarian interest of the country against the insensitive domination of the old parties. They were determined to force the tariff back onto the national agenda in the next election. The policy of protection had been a recurring and prominent issue in almost every election since Confederation and the primary issue in 1878, 1891 and 1911. The Liberals were pleased to view it, at least in their public rhetoric, as the defining issue between themselves and the Tories. But in truth the farmers had lost faith in both of them. The outcome of the campaign of 1921 was a watershed in Canadian political life. The advent of the Progressives meant the end of two-party politics. And the election result produced the first minority government in our history. It also brought a stinging disappointment to the grain growers. The Tories, under new leader Arthur Meighen, had been reduced to 50 seats. Crerar's Progressives numbered 65, a startling figure for a new party, but fewer than they had expected to win. Mackenzie King, the unfledged leader of the Liberals, faced the task of managing the first minority House of Commons. The Progressives, presumably, could make or break the government. But their strategic strength was more apparent than real. They might demand tariff concessions from the Liberals as the price of their support, but if their bluff was called, they really had nowhere to turn. They could hardly support Meighen's Conservatives who were firmly committed to protection. Mackenzie King was, of course, quite aware of their dilemma, so all he had to do was wait. And given the internal, ideological strains within the Progressive movement, he would not have to wait very long. At the end of 1922, Crerar resigned as leader and the farmers' party began its painful disintegration. The attempt to protect and improve their economic position through political action had come to little and grain growers swiftly lost interest in political solutions.

*Delivering grain to an Alberta elevator early this century.*

Meanwhile, as the 1920 harvest began, the open market was re-established. After an initial bullish surge in wheat futures, there began a long, sickening decline in the price of wheat, from $2.82 in September to $1.11 in December of 1921. There were several reasons for this, not least the return of Australia and Argentina to the market and Europe's desire to return to pre-war




*Cast of characters: Some of the players in the grain trade as portrayed by cartoonist Arch Dale in "The Grain Growers' Guide".*

prices. But to many Canadian producers, cosseted by three years of government-guaranteed high prices during the war, the open market now represented risk rather than opportunity. With the failure to reduce costs through a political assault on the tariff, it was not surprising that a campaign was launched to bring back the Wheat Board.

This was not, however, a unanimous view. Many farmers and many Progressive MPs, especially Crerar their erstwhile leader, were opposed to compulsory marketing. Even so, in response to pressure from across the prairies, Progressive MPs, Crerar included, pressed the new government of Mackenzie King to re-establish the Wheat Board on a permanent basis. The question of compulsion was avoided for the moment, but almost all farmers seemed to agree on a government-guaranteed minimum price through a Wheat Board. It was hardly a priority on the national scene. To most Canadians this was a local prairie matter and, if successful, would probably result in higher prices for flour and bread. In any case, the Progressives could not risk the defeat of the King Government on the issue

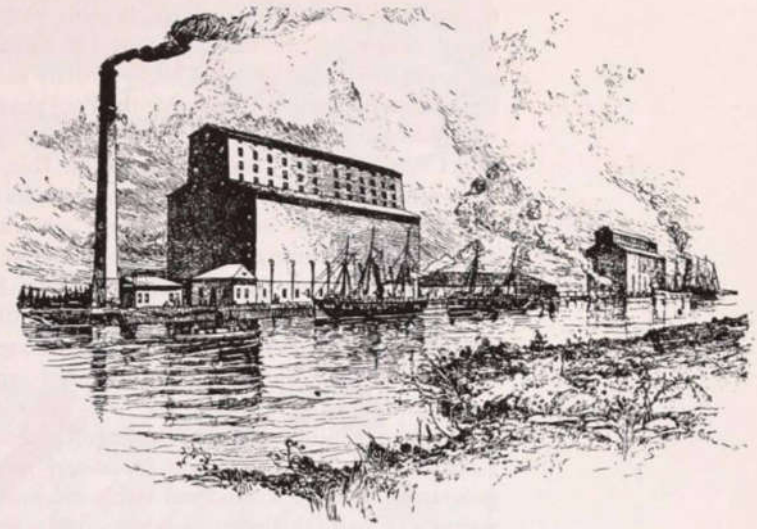
for it would mean an election, no Wheat Board and likely the return of a majority government which could safely ignore the West, again. King, slippery as always, seized on a recommendation of the Commons' Agriculture Committee and passed enabling legislation which permitted any two of the prairie provinces to set up a Wheat Board themselves.

Alberta and Saskatchewan passed legislation to this end (Manitoba refused), but the scheme foundered when they could not find anyone competent or willing to run it. There seemed to be little regret at the failure of such a makeshift and dubious alternative; certainly the politicians and the leaders of the farm organizations seemed relieved. The grain growers, it appeared, were running out of options.

It was at this point, the autumn of 1922, that Aaron Sapiro, the messiah of the pooling movement, brought his message to Western Canada. It was a critical moment. There had been some discussion of the technique of pooling in the grain growers' locals and in their newspaper, the *Grain Growers' Guide*. Price recovery had not yet begun (there would be a modest advance the following spring) and they had to accept the disappointing news that there would be no new Wheat Board. Crerar, at UGG, was urging that co-operation could accomplish more than any government board. So prairie producers were an avid audience when Sapiro came West to weave his spell; to liberate them from the clutches of the private grain trade and the futures marketing system.

Aaron Sapiro had first appeared in Ottawa where his enthusiasm for the cause of pooling had impressed Prime Minister King, but not to the point where King was willing to concede his request for government guarantees for a line of credit for a Wheat Pool. King, however, wished him well on his trip "to the West to speak on the subject at the instance of Crerar & others". Given what happens later, it is worth noting that Crerar and UGG were more than willing to give Sapiro a hearing. When he began his Western speaking tour he went from strength to strength: support for the pooling idea spread like an evangelistic wildfire.

A central feature of the campaign to drum up support for the pooling technique was a determined attack on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, Canadian home of the open market, and in particular, the trading in wheat futures. Admittedly, the operation of the futures market, in detail, is difficult to understand or, indeed, to explain without charts, graphs and a three-hour seminar. In general, the futures market is a means of hedging the risks of fluctuating international grain prices.



*Waterside grain elevators at Fort William (Thunder Bay).*

The futures system clearly protects the grain buyers, the huge milling companies to whom the grain is sold, and even the consumer who benefits from a lower, stable price. The grain grower would also benefit, despite Sapiro's attacks, since the buyer, with his risk diminished, could afford to offer a higher initial price. He could do so only because his purchases and his sales were hedged; in other words, futures contracts were protection against rises and declines in the world price. It was not the case, as Sapiro and others charged, of the grain dealers buying low when the farmers were forced to sell and then enjoying an unearned increment. Two federally appointed Royal Commissions on grain marketing demonstrated that the price spread between autumn and spring sales of wheat was equal to the costs of storage and carrying charges.

Despite the advantages of the futures trading system, and they were real enough, it was also true that the system could not function without a significant degree of speculation which provided the necessary liquidity. Ironically, there were a great many grain growers who played the futures market, often to their financial distress. Most prairie farmers, however, may be forgiven for missing the advantages of the futures system, but not so their leaders. Whatever the theory, the reality was much more interesting. In self-righteously condemning speculation, the grain growers also rejected hedging as a legitimate business tool in an uncontrollable world market place. The repercussions would be shocking, and not only for the grain growers.

To many prairie farmers pooling sounded honest, straightforward and simple, deceptively simple. Everywhere in the Pool area, grain growers would receive the same price for the same grade throughout the whole crop year. The rush

to market at harvest time, which allegedly so distorted supply to the advantage of the private grain buyers, would be replaced by orderly marketing. It was assumed as well that the Pool would set up some sort of central selling agency for direct sales both in Canada and abroad. This, it was promised, would eliminate at least two sets of middlemen. Sapiro was a persuasive advocate and, rightly or wrongly, many producers were convinced that they had been preyed upon by speculators in the Winnipeg Grain Exchange long enough. But however facile Sapiro's message, there remained dangerous ambiguities and unacknowledged problems ahead.

Any successful commodity Pool must include a significant number of producers in any given geographic area: the considered viable minimum was at least half. This immediately sparked a passionate debate between the proponents of a voluntary Pool and those who favoured a 100% compulsory Pool, enforced by legislation; that is a sellers' monopoly. This, quite obviously, was much more than an economic question. Henceforth, the arguments about wheat marketing had a political and ideological dimension, sometimes acknowledged, but often subsumed in a controversy which could often lead to incomprehension.

A second serious matter was the absence of any consensus on the meaning of the term "orderly marketing", one of the promised benefits of Pooling grain. To many producers it simply meant a way to ensure the regular distribution of deliveries and sales over the crop year to achieve a satisfactory average price for the members of the Pool. But to others, it meant matching supply to demand at best advantage. In other words, price manipulation through controlled selling; a device not unknown in the business community at large. Controlled marketing also entailed the undesirable likelihood of carry-overs. In both senses, however, orderly marketing meant, at the least, co-operative marketing. But there were already two successful farmer-owned companies in operation, with chains of elevators and their own experienced direct selling agencies. Finally, success in the new venture would depend upon the skill of Pool managers and especially the Central Selling Agency in predicting grain prices and achieving large, regular sales without hedging. Whatever the doubts and potential pitfalls, however, the pooling movement would have its day.

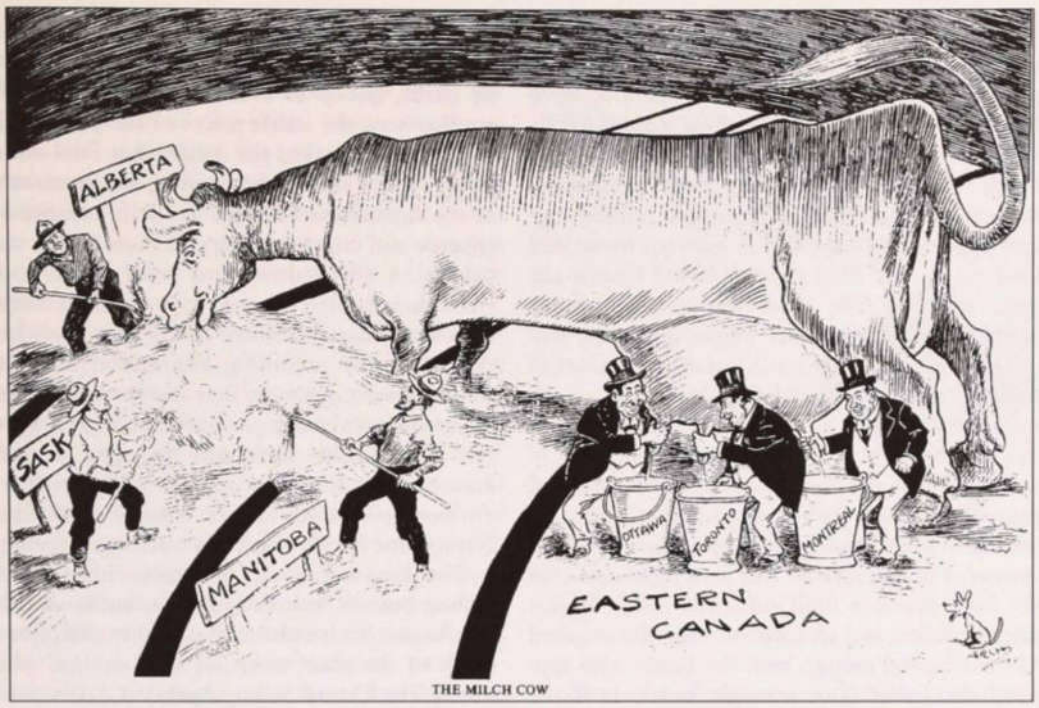
In July 1923, the Canadian Council of Agriculture met to consider the implications of the failure of the provincial governments to establish a new Wheat Board. There seemed to be no alternative other than co-operative action of some kind and the pooling technique touted by Sapiro seemed to offer a means of escape from the clutches of the private grain trade. At the meeting, Crerar of UGG proposed a prairie-wide voluntary Pool based on short-term contracts. He offered the proven experience of his company, its extensive elevator network, its selling agency and its considerable financial strength to help launch the project. But his scheme was a non-starter, even though he was willing to envisage the eventual takeover and disappearance of UGG by a flourishing Pool such as he had proposed. The SCEC would not face such a prospect with comparable equanimity; ironically as things turned out.

There were other obstacles as well. Crerar's liberal instincts set him against a compulsory Pool which he found inherently offensive and long term contracts which he deemed unnecessary. Explicitly, however, the scheme foundered on the rock of internecine Saskatchewan quarrelling, which by now seemed endemic. A growing anger in that province was encouraged and marshalled by the fledgling Farmers' Union of Canada, Saskatchewan Section (FUC) and directed against the more than cosy relationship among the SGGA, Sask Co-op and the Liberal provincial government with their overlapping leadership and interests. The FUC crowd, with a fine sense of non-discrimination, also disliked the other farmer-owned company, UGG, as well as Crerar, and hated the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. It was largely their animosity that accounts for the persisting notion that Crerar and UGG were implacably opposed to the pooling movement.

## COMMODITY POOLS

*It would be well to describe briefly how a commodity Pool works. Unlike the futures market, the operations of commodity Pools are not very complicated. A producer agrees by contract for a fixed period of time to deliver all his crop to the Pool. He receives in return an initial payment based on the Pool's projection of the world price for the crop year, a second or interim payment, usually just before seeding time, and a final payment, calculated on the total year's business when all the accounts are in.*

*The major financial challenge for the Pool was the money required for the initial payment which was made as large as considered prudent. This was supplied by the chartered banks who took the contracts held by the Pool as security and stipulated that the Pool maintain a 15cent/bushel margin between payout and the world price. In addition, the Pool would also require an extensive system of grain elevators to serve its members.*




*A Western view of Confederation by Arch Dale in "The Grain Growers' Guide".*

He was not; but he did oppose compulsion and government regulation of the wheat economy. In the event, Crerar's proposal went nowhere. Three separate and voluntary Pools were organized – with UGG financial aid it must be said – and, at least in Alberta, a government guarantee. They shortly combined to form a Central Selling Agency (CSA) with a seat on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange (helpfully paid for by UGG) under the managerial control of A.J. McPhail and experienced grain traders, once again supplied by UGG. The direct selling policy of the Pools was implemented through a network of agencies that grew quickly to 28 offices in 15 countries. Within three years the CSA was handling over 50% of the prairie wheat crop which, in total in the 1920s, made up two-fifths of the world export total. After a brief but lively fling with co-existence, Sask Pool took over the SCEC and all its elevators. UGG, after some hesitation, declined, probably very properly, to sell its chain of elevators to the Pools when they refused to agree to handle non-Pool grain, thus freezing out UGG members of whom many chose not to join the provincial Pools.

The new Wheat Pools appeared to be off to a promising start, although all was not rosy. McPhail was obliged to fight a continuing and draining rear-guard action against the ideologues of the FUC who kept demanding a 100% compulsory Pool and castigated McPhail and the CSA for a very limited (and in fact timely) use of the futures market in the initial year. The most enthusiastic supporters of the Pools, and especially those who recruited and signed up members, raised expectations unduly with their inflated claims. The very fact of the formation of the Pools, they boasted, would immediately raise the world price by 10 cents/bushel. They bravely – and foolishly – implied that once the Pools were firmly established their great market influence would certainly ensure prosperity for all prairie grain growers.

During the first three full years of Pool operations, the crop years 1925-26 to 1927-28 inclusive, there were few dark clouds to cool the ardour of Pool enthusiasts. On average, the Pools handled over half the prairie wheat crop at prices of $1.45, $1.42 and $1.4225 respectively. While gratifying, these prices were a far cry from those of the war years, although that was hardly the fault of the Pools. Not surprisingly, there were fierce disputes, often based on extremely dubious figures, over the question of whether Pool or non-Pool growers were better off. They were quite inconclusive, of course, but still hotly argued. Total producer income, however, was consistently high for those three crop years, due largely to world conditions: – a stable gold price, heavy European imports, high levels of international investment and heavy yields on the prairies; nor were any of these the fault of the Pools either. Only in the first of these years was the CSA obliged to protect its margin with the banks by entering the futures market, and then only briefly, albeit effectively. But even that brought howls of protest from the purists.

There were other factors, however, that ought to have been considered and should have prompted a greater degree of caution, even though McPhail's selling policy could hardly have been considered radical. In order to get as much cash into the hands of their members as soon as possible, the Pools operated on very narrow projections of the spread between initial and final price. The only charges levied against the final price by the CSA were administrative expenses, which were kept admirably low; a special reserve of 2 cents/ bushel to meet the costs of purchasing and constructing elevators, which were extensive and a commercial reserve of only 1%, which would prove completely inadequate in a crisis. All of the Pool grain was unhedged and thus immediately vulnerable to fluctuations in the world price. Pool supporters argued that their system of initial, interim and final payments over the crop year was itself sufficient hedge against price variation and adequate to meet the required 15 cent/bushel margin with the banks who supplied the credit. True enough, but only if the world price remained relatively stable. And in any case, with roughly 20% of the current world export production, the Pools themselves were not in a position to maintain a stable price by managing the flow of their grain to market. And their narrow spread might then be placed in grave danger.

*T.A. Crerar contemplates a bumper crop.*

On top of everything else, wheat was a difficult commodity to control effectively by pooling, unlike, for example, raisins, the supply of which could be closely managed. (It had been in California raisins, by the way, where Sapiro had gained his early pooling experience). Wheat could be grown in any of the temperate zones of the world. Rising demand or significant price increases could bring a vast new acreage into production from Canada's major competitors, the United States, Argentina and Australia, or even occasional exporters like the Soviet Union, which, desperate for hard currencies, was at the time dumping wheat on the European market. Those importing countries of Europe, furthermore, were under increasing pressure from their own farmers to protect their position against foreign imports by tariffs, quotas or other trade restrictions. Put another way, the stable prices of the years of the mid-twenties masked the danger that Pool selling policy, while virtuously avoiding the speculators in the futures market, did, in itself, constitute a gigantic and unprotected speculation on the cash market. A sharp downward price break could erode their limited reserves, wipe out their margin with the banks and throw the Wheat Pools into chaos. Yet the prevailing assumption remained among Pool supporters that market control was the best way to ensure good returns to grain growers. This would necessarily presume as well, however, that Europe would be willing to pay a price commensurate to their costs of production. Testing time for the Pools was not long in coming.

The largest harvest in prairie history, 545 million bushels, matured in the summer of 1928, but August frosts reduced the quality sharply and much of the grain went out of condition when stored. The Central Selling Agency (CSA) reduced its now customary initial payment of $1.00 to 85 cents/bushel in a prudent move to head off potential trouble. But there were many anxious moments as the world price hovered uncomfortably close to the bank margin throughout the year. The final price for the 1928 crop was only $1.185 and there was a very heavy carryover. Unfortunately as well, too little notice was taken at the time of increases in European tariff rates and the plummeting value of European currencies.

The Pools were still confident in the early autumn of 1929. The crop was only half as large as the record harvest of the previous year. When heavy futures trading drove the price to $1.56/bushel, the CSA once more set its initial payment at $1.00/bushel. It turned out to be a costly mistake. After the stock market broke in October, the price of wheat began a steady, painful slide that took many farmers to bankruptcy. It also did in the three prairie Wheat Pools. Without hedges, the CSA was helpless as the world price dropped below the initial payment. It did little good to blame the speculators on the Grain Exchange. Most of them were wiped out as well. But in any case, they were not responsible for the collapse of the international wheat market. By the end of the crop year, the small commercial reserve of the Pools had long since evaporated and they were trying to stave off the importunate bankers who were urging them to dump their grain for whatever they could get. Even Crerar conceded that the Pools were probably right in their contention that "if they had offered wheat at lower than market prices, the chances are that they would have got counter

offers still lower". Surpluses and a falling market have the nasty effect of strengthening the hand of the buyer, especially in Europe where there was much suspicion of the Pools. Hence the Pools had little alternative but to seek help from provincial and federal governments. The failure of the Pools as selling agent marked not only the end of an experiment in market control, but ushered in a new world for Canadian wheat growers.

In their distress, the Pools found themselves rather friendless. Until the difficulties began, the business community of Central Canada generally supported the Pools. The manufacturers cheered them on because the Pools took the farmers' minds off decreases in the tariff and the bankers applauded because they no longer pressed for amendments to the Bank Act. Now, however, the Pools were sharply criticized for having messed up the selling of their grain and the government would be condemned if it came to the relief of those who suffered as a result of their own mistakes. But governments were inexorably drawn in and the Canadian wheat trade changed forever.

Prairie governments, to whom the Pools turned initially, were beset on many fronts by the deepening Depression and quite unable to rescue the Pools by continuing to guarantee their margins with the banks, despite persistent pressure from the bankers. According to Crerar, who had left United Grain Growers in December 1929 to join King's Cabinet, this pressure was both unfair and unnecessary. He wrote to the prime minister that "any delay in moving our grain to foreign markets has not even in the most remote degree affected the stability of our financial institutions". In the early part of the year the banks always had substantial advances outstanding against Canadian grain (including that of UGG, the Pools and the private trade as well). In any case, as Crerar pointed out, the risk was insured by the grain itself and the tangible Pool assets of $25 million in fully modern elevators. As far as he was concerned, the banks were part of the problem.

By March 1930, it was widely rumoured that there would be no second payment from the Pools that spring, and consequently, a shortage of money for seeding. Not surprisingly, the West began to look for assistance in Ottawa and sought a federal government guarantee of wheat prices. The new federal government of R.B. Bennett intervened, not to save the Pools, who were condemned for mismanagement, but rather to satisfy the bankers who now turned to Ottawa for succour. The prairie premiers recommended that the crisis be stabilized by Ottawa with a guaranteed price of 70 cents/bu for wheat. This was a critical turning point in the history of the wheat economy.

WE HAVE A WHEAT POLICY!
SAY DICK, DO WE HAVE A WHEAT POLICY?
HUSTLE OUT, HARRY, AND LOOK FOR ONE
1930 WHEAT $1.03
1932 WHEAT .40¢
Winnipeg Free Press

*Prime Minister R.B. Bennett faces a falling wheat price as the Depression deepens.*

Once the government began to guarantee a floor price for wheat, the trend was irreversible. They were then obliged to buy up surpluses to maintain the floor price. After a few years of that they abandoned their efforts (indeed, the disposition of the surplus became highly political itself) and in 1935 they brought back the Wheat Board as selling agent for those prairie grain growers who chose to use it and each year guaranteed a minimum price. As far as the Western farmers were concerned, the tariff was now out of politics for good. As long as they were guaranteed a minimum price, the costs of production were de-emphasized and lobbying to raise the floor price became the focus of political action.

The hopeful experiment in selling pooled grain and avoiding the private grain trade entirely had been dashed. But much else had been lost as well. Although the Pools remained – primarily as elevator companies – their members now looked to government rather than to the co-operative spirit and practice which had sustained them since the beginning of the twentieth century. No longer could they take pride in being independent commodity producers able to rely on themselves. The pre-Pool emphasis on maintaining income by controlling production costs had been sacrificed to a diversion in market control. Except for a few die-hards, the farmers no longer saw themselves as managers of their own economic destiny. The grain growers had become clients of the government and the tariff, as an election issue, became irrelevant. ◆

*J.E. Rea is Professor of history, University College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.*

National Archives of Canada

*Francis Roy Brown, born in Stockton, Manitoba.*

**By Carol Bennett McCuaig**

*A case of mistaken identity dogged them throughout their flying careers – which one shot down the "Red Baron"?*

# The Curious Tale of Two Roy Browns

In June 1975 a man named Roy Brown was elected to the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame. Eager for a story, Ottawa journalists wrote him up as the man who shot down the German flying ace Baron Manfred von Richthofen during the First World War. They were wrong; Roy Brown of Winnipeg, although a distinguished aviator in his own right, was not the man who defeated the "Red Baron". That exploit was performed by a different Roy Brown, from Ontario. This was just the latest episode in a case of mistaken identity which dogged the pair throughout their flying careers, and the confusion persists to this day.

National Archives of Canada

*Arthur Roy Brown, who came from Carleton Place, Ontario.*

To those "in the know" it is easy to see how the muddle came about. There were many parallels in the lives of the two men, who were much of an age. Arthur Roy Brown was born at Carleton Place, Ontario, 23 December 1893, the eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. J. Morton Brown. He was always known as Roy. Three years later, Francis Roy Brown was born at Stockton, Manitoba. He, too, used his second name.

From an early age the Ontario Brown was intrigued by the idea of flight. He and some friends were responsible for what may have been the first UFO sighting in the neighbourhood

when they managed to attach lights to a kite which they flew above the community at night, to the amazement of the townsfolk.

At the outbreak of the First World War, A. Roy Brown, an excellent athlete, wanted to join the air service but at that time he did not possess the private pilot's certificate which was a prerequisite. Determined to be accepted, he learned to fly at the Wright Brothers' flying school in Dayton, Ohio, qualifying as a civilian pilot in 1915.

He frequently had to shoo cows away from the air strip before his aircraft could take off. Being airborne in the pioneer era was a risky business; during his flying career he suffered 27 fractures, and he once lay for hours on a slab in the morgue, officially ticketed as dead.

When Brown first volunteered for war service, he failed the medical and was rejected. Refusing to give up, he persisted until he was finally given a commission as a Flight Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Air Service. His dream almost ended during his training at Chingford, England, when back injuries, caused by another crash-landing, kept him in hospital for some time.

He reached France in 1917, having been posted to No. 9 Squadron, Royal Naval Air Service, flying Sopwith Pups and Triplanes. In the summer of 1917 he also served with Squadrons No. 3 and No. 11, participating in missions to protect the British Navy from enemy air attack. As time went on these operations were extended to include reconnaissance work.

Meanwhile, young Francis Roy Brown also volunteered for service when war broke out. As a member of the Canadian Cycle Corps he soon found himself in Europe, where he saw service at Ypres, Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele.

In 1917 he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps for pilot training and, having qualified, went into action once more as a member of No. 204 Squadron. His new career was short-lived. He was shot down over Belgium in 1918, shortly before the Armistice was signed.

No. 9 Squadron had been attached to the Royal Flying Corps and issued with Sopwith Camels. Back in Carleton Place the anxious family of A. Roy Brown learned from his letters home that the fighting, both on land and in the air, had escalated to serious proportions. They were glad to know that their son was equipped with what he described as "the best machines we could possibly get. We can keep the Hun pretty well in his place in the air."

In the thick of vicious air fighting in 1917-1918, A. Roy Brown distinguished himself by downing at least 12 enemy aircraft. In addition to putting these out of action he also managed to save the life of a comrade who was under attack by four enemy pilots. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for gallantry.

***Death in the clouds: a First World War dog fight, from the German point of view.***

The official citation noted that:

*On the 3rd September, 1917, he attacked a two-seater Aviatick, in company with his flight. The enemy machine was seen to dive down vertically, the enemy observer falling over on the side of the fuselage, shot.*

*On the 5th September, 1917, in company with formation, he attacked an Albatross scout and twoseater, driving them away from our lines. One machine was observed to go down apparently out of control.*

*On the 15th September, 1917, while on patrol, he dived on two Aviaticks and three Albatross scouts, followed by his flight. He dived several times and picked out one enemy scout, firing about 200 rounds, when the enemy machine went down out of control, spinning on its back.*

*On the 20th September, 1917, whilst leading his flight, he dived on five Albatross scouts. Flight Lieut Brown picked out one enemy machine and opened fire. One of his guns jammed, but he carried on with*

*the other. The enemy machine went down out of control and over on its back, and remained in that position for about thirty seconds, whilst Flight Lieut Brown continued firing until his other gun jammed. The enemy machine then disappeared in the clouds, still on its back.*

*Another officer of the same patrol was later followed by four enemy machines, as he was separated from the formation. Both Flight Lieut Brown's guns were jammed, but he dived on the enemy machines and drove them off, thus undoubtedly saving the pilot's life.*

Intense air fighting took place in the spring of 1918, and it was during that time that A. Roy Brown engaged in his famous aerial battle with Baron Manfred von Richthofen, a member of the renowned "Flying Circus".

The official award for the defeat of von Richthofen was given to Captain Brown who later received a Bar to his DSC, although not specifically for that achievement. His success was hotly contested by Australian machine gunners who had been shooting into the air from ground level.

Brown said later that there wasn't much glamour in the fight which vanquished the Red Baron. During the "dog fight" he had already downed one aircraft when, pulling out of a dive, he noticed that one of his friends was being chased by a German fighter, red in colour. Brown rushed to the rescue. The comrade he saved was his friend, "Wop" May who later achieved fame back in Canada as a bush pilot.

At the time, Brown didn't know that his adversary was Germany's leading knight of the air, the daring aristocrat who had shot down 80 Allied aircraft.

Describing the adventure years later, Brown commented "I never saw Richthofen until ten minutes before I shot him down. Then, he was to me merely a begoggled unknown, hunched in the cockpit of his red triplane."

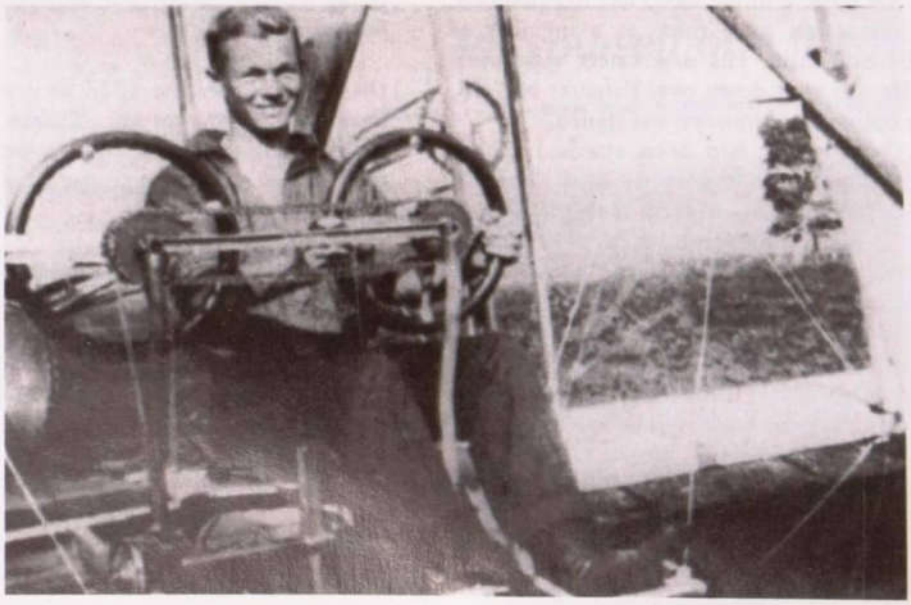
The defeat of the glamorous von Richthofen was a real morale booster for the Allied airmen. It was then that Francis Roy Brown began receiving congratulations from people who assumed that he was the fearless Canadian who had just put the Red Baron out of action. At that point, of course, both men were attached to the Royal Flying Corps.

After the war, the two Roy Browns returned to Canada, where each man continued with his flying career in civilian life. At that point they had never met.

F. Roy Brown served with Western Canada Airways at The Pas and Cranberry Portage, Manitoba, later becoming superintendent and chief pilot of their prairie airmail operations, working out of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. When the government cancelled that service he became chief pilot for Canadian Airways Limited in the Lac du Bonnet region of Manitoba.

In 1934, together with J. Moar, Milt Ashton and Ted Stull he organized Wings Limited. This was a bush-flying outfit which was later re-organized as Central Northern Airways.

A. Roy Brown also took up bush-flying work, in Northern Ontario. He, too, later owned his own company. This coincidence led to further confusion in the minds of his fellow Canadians. On one occasion a prospector, who had been flown into the North by the Manitoba Brown,



*A. Roy Brown at the Wright Brothers' flying school, 1915.*

National Archives of Canada

*F. Roy Brown: a life in the air flying mail and cargo.*

boasted to friends that he had travelled with the man who shot down von Richthofen. They pointed out his mistake, but he insisted that he was right; the pilot had mentioned his wife, Edith, and everyone knew that this was the name of the Carleton Place flier's wife. As it happened, both women were called Edith.

In 1929, an aircraft containing important mining officials was lost in the Northwest Territories. A rescue operation was mounted by Western Canada Airways and F. Roy Brown and eight other pilots spent ten weeks searching in the remote Baker Lake and Bathurst Inlet regions of the Northwest Territories. It so happened that Brown's aircraft was also forced down in this rugged terrain. He spent three weeks on a remote lake in the Barrens, trying to survive in temperatures which went as low as -50°F.

The story had a happy ending when both groups of missing men were found alive. This time it was an amused A. Roy Brown who received the good wishes of an admiring public.

Finally the two men ran into each other at a convention, where they discussed the situation. They laughingly agreed that they even looked somewhat alike. They became friends, but it reached the point where the Manitoba man, on being introduced to new people, would immediately say "I didn't shoot down von Richthofen!" which also led to misunderstandings because of the controversy that had arisen since the war, with the Australians claiming that honour.

The trauma of his early flying experiences and the many crashes he suffered had taken their toll on the health of Arthur Roy Brown, who died in 1944 at his home in Stouffville, Ontario, at the early age of 50 years. As the word of his death spread, wreaths and tributes poured into the home of Francis Roy Brown.

He, however, was far from dead. At the time of the Second World War he went on to have a distinguished career as a test pilot, working for MacDonald Brothers Aircraft at Winnipeg. During that period he tested more than 2,500 aircraft.

After the war he entered the realm of Provincial politics. From 1953 to 1958 he served as a Liberal member in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, representing the constituency of Rupertsland. He died in 1960.

In 1969, a plaque, one of a series set up throughout Ontario by the Department of Public Records and Archives, was dedicated at Carleton Place, home town of the late Captain Arthur Roy Brown, DSC. There was no chance of any confusion on that occasion; guests of honour included Brown's widow and his brother, local historian Howard M. Brown. It seemed as if the curious story of the two Roy Browns had, once and for all, been laid to rest, yet there was still another chapter to be played out.

Fifteen years after his death, Francis Roy Brown was elected to the Aviation Hall of Fame, with the following citation: "His contribution as a bush pilot, airmail pilot and World War Two test pilot, coupled with his total commitment to encourage a younger generation of airmen to make substantial contributions to the development of northern flying, has been of outstanding benefit to Canadian aviation."

As soon as this honour was announced, the story of his famous namesake and the encounter with the Red Baron hit the headlines again.

In Canada today there are people who believe that Arthur Roy Brown also deserves a place in the Aviation Hall of Fame. If this ever comes to pass the confusion will undoubtedly continue. The saga of these two heroes has been a case of mistaken identity all the way. ◆

*Carol Bennett McCuaig is author of "The Voyage of the 'John Barry' " published in the February-March 1994 issue of "The Beaver".*

# The Philatelic Poets

By Les Harding

At the turn of the last century poetry, or rather, rhyming doggerel, was an unfortunate part of Canadian philately. The stamp poet was a fixture and no amount of abuse could drive him from his pursuit of dreamy effusions in Elysian fields.

A good example of the prevailing sentimentality was this missive by "Poeticus" concerning his beloved stamp album:

*Evening's shadows slowly creeping*
*Chasing Sol's bright beams away.*
*Found me sitting in my arm-chair*
*At the close of one long day.*

*Found me turning o'er the pages*
*Of my treasured album there.*
*Of all my friends, the truest*
*Of all earth's goods most dear*

*What joy with me can comprehend?*
*As at the close of weary day*
*I sit, my album on my knees*
*And wile the hours away.*

This excerpt appeared in *The Canadian Philatelic Magazine* for December 1893. The editor refused to publish any more but added a note. "There was about a-yard-and-a-half more of the blamed stuff, but in the interest of philately I thought it best to suppress it."

Sometimes the doggerel was plain silly:

*There was a collector named Vaughn*
*Who took his stamps out on the laughn*
*A mighty wind strong*
*Came rustling along,*
*And now his stamps are all gaughn.*
– *Energy*, February 1901

*There was a maid in Ashantee*
*Whose clothing was awfully scanty,*
*To keep out the damp*
*She stuck on a stamp*
*'Twas found in the hut of a Fantee.*
– *Ottawa Philatelist*, December 1892

(According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, "Fantee", a noun, means "member or language of a Negro tribe inhabiting Ghana.")

If you look hard you can sometimes find an awareness of current affairs in the stamp poet's output. The above was probably inspired, in part, by the Ashantee War in what is now Ghana. Commenting on the relief of Khartoum in the Sudan, by Lord Kitchener's troops, this gem appeared in *The Canadian Philatelic Review* of 10 February 1899.

*There was a young man in Japan*
*Who wanted stamps from the Soudan.*
*He to Kitchener wrote,*
*And this is his note*
*That the Sirdar sent to the young man:*

*My dear little man from Japan*
*I'll send the stamps if I can.*
*I may not have time*
*For they'll be hard to find*
*A-foolin' around in the sand.*

A certain "Professor Shelly" sent his rhymes to *The Canadian Journal of Philately* in July 1893. He was so overcome by the beauty of the first set of American commemorative stamps (16 varieties publicizing the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago) that he just had to take pen to paper. "Only a Columbian Set" was the result:

*I do not want a Baltimore or a rare Macon,*
*Or a Millbury stamp or a New Haven,*
*Nor a set of Germany, France or Spain,*
*But a Columbian set of U.S. plain.*

*I don't want your Canada or Newfoundland,*
*Nor a Mauritius rarity or cold Greenland,*
*Or even a set of surcharged Jhind,*
*But simply a Columbian set, do you mind!*

*I don't want your Leewards or Heligoland,*
*Or a specimen set of our fair land,*
*But give me a set of Columbian complete*
*It's only a $16.35 feat!*

At today's prices "Professor Shelly's" set of Columbians would run to $13,225! Even more if never hinged.

Unquestionably, the "greatest" and most prolific stamp poet to appear in the pages of Canada's philatelic press was Guy W. Green. Apart from a little volume published as *Fun and Frolic with an Indian Ball Team*, Green confined his literary talents to the world of philately. In an offering from *The Ottawa Philatelist*'s Christmas number for 1892, entitled "Billy McGee's Sad Fate", Green portrays a boy whose enthusiasm for collecting stamps left him weary and ill. The last verse tells the sad tale, made all the more poignant by the nearness of the holiday season:

*Out on the hill is a new-made grave,*
*And sadly one reads on the stone;*
*"Here lies in his youth, a boy who in truth*
*Succumbed to Philately alone."*

Green carried maudlin philatelic sentimentality to a new level when he wrote things like "A Re-Awakened Love", which appeared in *The Canadian Journal of Philately* for June 1893:

*One summer morning long ago*
*I laid my book of stamps away;*
*I kissed the volume bending low,*
*I recollect the very day.*

A young philatelist wanders the world heart-broken and stampless. After 11 increasingly sentimental stanzas the poet concludes:

*I found my aged album then,*
*I saw its faded blue and gold,*
*And scanned its pages once again –*
*Old love increased a hundred fold.*

Seven years later the irrepressible Mr. Green was still rhyming, but perhaps had grown more cynical, as "The Philatelic Liar" suggests. It appeared in December 1900 in Berlin, Ontario's, *Energy*:

*The Philatelic liar sat*
*Within his cheerless den*
*And told weird tales of startling finds*
*To catch attentive men.*
*He told of trunks that he had found*
*Just brimmed and running o'er*
*With stamps that gaze of mortal eye*
*Had ne'er beheld before...*

*His hearers then, with one accord,*
*Rose up with wrathful eyes,*
*And quickly fell upon that man*
*Who told such monstrous lies.*
*They heard unmoved his strange accounts*
*Of attics, trunks and such,*
*But that last journalistic tale*
*Was just a drop too much.*

In one last example from *The Canadian Journal of Philately* for July 1893, "The Stamp Poet's Enemy Speaks," Guy W. Green leaves us and perhaps himself with a timely warning:

*Awake from your slumbers while yet there is time,*
*Reveal us your manhood to-day;*
*Thrust out this rank foe who is sapping our life,*
*Remove from the walls of Philately's groves*
*The fellow who writes without reason or rhyme*
*His lachrymal lines about stamps.* ◆

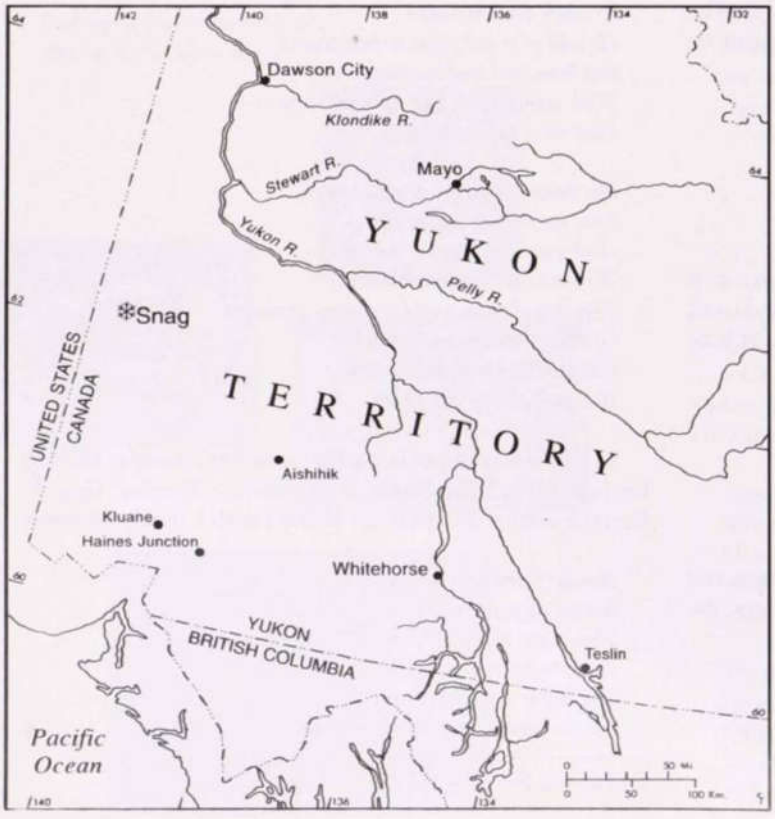
*Les Harding lives in St. John's, Newfoundland.*

# Canada's Coldest Day

*Fifty years ago at Snag in the Yukon it was so cold that Gordon Toole's breath turned to powder and fell to the ground*

**By David W. Phillips**

Fifty years ago, on 3 February 1947 at 7:20 A.M. Yukon time, weather observer Gordon Toole hurried the 30 metres from the warm, log barracks at Snag Airport, Yukon, to the weather instrument compound next to the runway. For eight straight days the temperature had been below -58°F, but on this morning it felt colder. Toole could plainly hear the dogs barking at the Indian village, six kilometres to the north, and his exhaled breath made a tinkling sound as it fell to the ground in a white powder. His six husky dogs were really feeling the cold. On this morning, they were asleep on top of their kennels, curled up with their noses tucked right up under their tails to garner every calorie of heat.




By the time he arrived at the white louvered shelter housing the thermometers, he could feel the cold seeping through his parka. He unlatched the door of the instrument shelter, and shone the flashlight inside, but was careful not to lean forward and breathe on the thermometers. From the corner of his eye, he saw something that he had never seen before. The tiny sliding scale inside the glass thermometer column had fallen into the bulb at the end, well below the -80°F point – the last mark on the thermometer.

Toole rushed back to the barracks where he coaxed his colleague, Wilf Blezard, to return to the instrument compound. Pointing a set of dividers on one end of the tiny bit of alcohol left in the column, Toole estimated the temperature to be about -83°F. As he dutifully scratched a mark on the outside of the thermometer sheath adjacent to the end of the alcohol, he thought about what head office had advised three days earlier. If the alcohol level ever fell below -80°F, they should mark a corresponding point on the thermometer sheath with a pen. Typical advice from Toronto, Toole thought. Ink does not flow at that temperature. Instead he made the historic mark using a fine, sharp file.

To complete the job, the observers noted that the weather was a repeat of the last two months – clear, dry and calm. Snow on the ground amounted to 38 centimetres, but was evaporating at three centimetres a day. The visibility at eye-level was 30 kilometres; however, on this day, ground visibility was greatly reduced. At about arm's length, an eerie, dull-grey shroud of patchy ice or frost fog hung above the dogs and heated buildings.

Back inside the Snag weather office, the Department of Transport radio operator transmitted the weather observation to Whitehorse and Toronto. Within the hour, the Director of the Canadian Weather Service congratulated Snag on becoming North America's "cold pole". He also asked Toole to send the thermometer back to be

*A group of Snag residents defy the elements, February 1947. The first three men in back row, from left, are Max Bowitz, Gordon Toole and Wilf Blezard.*

re-calibrated. The two observers shared the news with the rest of the camp, before packing the thermometer for air shipment to Toronto to have the readings confirmed.

But it was so cold that almost a week passed before it would be warm enough for an airplane to land at Snag. Once in Toronto, the thermometer was put through several laboratory tests before technicians concluded that it had been reading about 1.6°F in error. Three months later, the weather service accepted a value of -81.4°F as the corrected temperature – still the lowest official temperature ever recorded in North America. It is a record that still stands today – 50 years later.

At Snag that day, all 16 men did not need confirmation in Toronto. They could feel how cold it was. But still they were excited by the news. Blezard, now retired and living in Grande Prairie, Alberta, recalls: "We had to put a little lock on the door to the instrument screen because everybody was rushing out and looking at the thermometers. Even the slightest bit of body heat would cause the alcohol to jump." Fifty years is a long time ago, so perhaps it is not surprising that Toole's memories of the day are different. "Staff interest," he said, "was pretty limited. There was no euphoria, prolonged celebrating or serious discussion on how to commemorate the moment."

Perhaps no one understood the historic significance or maybe it was just that the cold showed no sign of abating. But that was to change. To start, by 2 p.m., the day's high reached a relatively balmy -54°F. Before the day was over, media from around the world had besieged the "frozen chosen" for exclusive interviews on the historic cold. Writers from the *Milwaukee Journal* and *Vancouver Sun* phoned for front-page stories to learn what -80°F felt like. *The Globe and Mail* reported the following headline: "Snag snug as mercury [*sic*] sags to a record -82.6°". The thermometers did not use mercury because it freezes at -39°F. They were alcohol thermometers and the newspaper knew it. Later in the story: "the only reason the men didn't celebrate was that all the alcohol at the station was in the thermometer and that was nearly frozen."

Telegrams of congratulations arrived from many countries. Several messages referred to the world's new cold pole. But some expressed scepticism. For British meteorologists, who used to

*Gordon Toole on the trail in later life.*

measure coldness in degrees of frost (below 32°F), upwards of 115 degrees of frost was just too much to comprehend.

On 8 February, a plane arrived at Snag with American military and media who wanted to learn what it was like living and working in such cold conditions. The men at Snag, however, were more interested in the visitors' cargo of meat, beer and whisky than in becoming celebrities.

Why is the lowest temperature record one of the best-remembered Canadian weather records? First, it was for that typically Canadian feature: cold. Second, it was the record for the western world. And finally, the short, odd name, "Snag", made this legend of frigidity live on.

Snag was named during the Klondike gold rush. Because boatmen could not read the silty waters of nearby stretches of the White River and its tributaries, boats had to be poled upstream. On occasion, they would be "snagged" and punctured by sharp pointed tree trunks submerged below the milky waters, hence the name.

The Snag weather station operated from 1943 to 1966. It was located at the Snag Airport, east of the Alaska-Yukon boundary, and 25 kilometres north of the Alaska Highway at Mile 1178. The airport was at co-ordinates 62°23'N and 140°23'W, with an elevation of 646 metres. Set in a broad bowl-shaped, north-south valley of the White River, a tributary of the Yukon River, the now-abandoned airport was surrounded by unglaciated uplands of moderate relief. The vegetation was mostly scrub and poplar trees of about three to six metres tall. The magnificent St. Elias mountains lay 50 kilometres to the south. The village of Snag was six kilometres to the north of the airport, near the point where the Snag Creek flowed into the White River. The village's population of eight or ten Native people and fur traders was smaller than the staff at the airport.

Of the sixteen staff members at Snag airport, four single men in their early twenties were there to observe the weather. Toole was the officer-in-charge of the weather station. Meteorological staff earned about $1,320 annually, with an extra $20 monthly isolation allowance, which covered the room rate in the barracks. The daily food charge was 50 cents.

The other airport employees were radio operators, also employed by the Department of Transport, and airport maintenance and operations personnel, employed by the Royal Canadian Air Force, whose main job was to keep the runway open. Incidentally, in winter this meant compacting the snow, not ploughing or blowing the strip bare.

Snag was part of the Northwest Staging Route – one of several emergency landing strips or observing stations through Northwest Canada to connect Alaska and Yukon with Central Canada and the United States. They were set up in 1942 and 1943 to provide basic weather services for the RCAF, the United States Army Air Force, and for civilian aviation companies providing military transport. Most pilots flying the northwest route had to fly with visual contact with the ground, called visual flight rules (VFR); otherwise, they might get lost. If weather socked in the main airports, the pilots used alternate airports like Snag and Smith River.

The continental climate in this part of Yukon resembles that of eastern Siberia. Yearly precipitation averages 339 millimetres, with nearly two-thirds of that falling between May and September. The average yearly snowfall totals 155 centimetres. Winds are light with, in winter, a large percentage of calms. Temperatures are more variable with prolonged cold winters and warm summers. The January average daytime high is

-13.2°F and the average night-time low -32.1°F; while comparable July averages are high 69.6°F and low 44.6°F.

The winter of 1946-47 had been exceptionally cold in the Canadian Northwest. At Snag, temperatures dipped below -58°F on six days in December, and on eleven days in January. From 27 January to 5 February, temperatures remained below -67°F. On 30 January, the temperature fell to -76°F, giving Yukon its coldest day ever, and Canada, its lowest in 38 years. On 2 February, the temperature fell to -80°F, which was a new all-time Canadian record cold. But it was to last only a day: the very next day, the corrected temperature was -81.4°F – a new record low for all of North America.

The cold was not confined to Snag. Temperatures reached their lowest point between 1 and 3 February throughout the Yukon. Among the coldest sites were Aishihik Airport, -70.1°F; Dawson City, -72.9°F; Haines Junction, -63.0°F; Kluane Lake, -56.0°F; Teslin, -52.1°F; Watson Lake, -67.0°F; and Whitehorse, -59.1°F.

There may have been more. On 3 February, the thermometer at Fort Selkirk, a very small community on the Yukon River, 180 kilometres east-northeast of Snag, recorded -85°F, (corrected for instrument error). This reading, however, was not considered official because the thermometer was exposed on the outside wall of a building and not housed in the standard instrument shelter. That same day at Mayo – a station about 300 kilometres northeast of Snag – the temperature apparently reached -80°F. "Apparently" because at midnight on 15 February, the station burned down, destroying the weather instruments and observation records. However, photographic evidence exists which shows Mayo's temperature reading on that day, about -80°F, which is just marginally above the Snag low. Long-time resident and local booster, Jean Gordon, claims that while Snag may have a lower temperature extreme, Mayo, with its two schools, hotels and population of 500 people, can boast being the coldest "decent-sized" community in North America and, as a road sign entering Mayo claims, the town with the largest temperature range: a huge 177 degrees, from a maximum of 97°F to a minimum of -80°F.

How did such cold happen? As in most Arctic cold spells, weather conditions in 1946-47 were favourable for a steep temperature inversion. Inversions, a frequent feature of arctic winters, are exceptions to the general rule that temperature decreases with increasing altitude. Inversions can be produced by gravitational drainage of cold air or by radiation. In elevated terrain, the heavy, dense air sinks and slides down the mountain slopes, often pushing any warmer air aloft. The ground also grows colder by radiating heat to the cloud-free sky. In doing so, the ground readily cools the air immediately above it, especially when the skies are clear, there is unlimited visibility, and the winds are calm or light. A layer of air closest to the ground may be as much as 20° to 40° colder than the air at 1,000 metres.

In 1946-47, a strong westerly circulation across North America confined cold arctic air over Alaska and northwestern Canada for much of the winter. During this time, the cold dome of heavy,

## Top Canadian Cold Spots

| PROVINCE/TERRITORY | °C | °F | DATE | LOCATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alberta | -61.1 | -77.9 | 11 Jan 1911 | Fort Vermilion |
| British Columbia | -58.9 | -74.0 | 31 Jan 1947 | Smith River |
| Manitoba | -52.8 | -63.0 | 9 Jan 1899 | Norway House |
| New Brunswick | -47.2 | -52.9 | 1 Feb 1955 | Sisson Dam |
| Newfoundland/Labrador | -51.1 | -59.9 | 17 Feb 1973 | Esker 2 |
| Northwest Territories | -57.2 | -70.9 | 26 Dec 1917 | Fort Smith |
| Nova Scotia | -41.1 | -41.9 | 31 Jan 1920 | Upper Stewiacke |
| Ontario | -58.3 | -72.9 | 23 Jan 1935 | Iroquois Falls |
| Prince Edward Island | -37.2 | -34.9 | 26 Jan 1884 | Kilmahumaig |
| Quebec | -54.4 | -65.9 | 5 Feb 1923 | Doucet |
| Saskatchewan | -56.7 | -70.0 | 1 Feb 1893 | Prince Albert |
| Yukon | -63.0 | -81.4 | 3 Feb 1947 | Snag |

dense air over the Yukon intensified. With a continuous supply of cold air from northeastern Siberia, the cold dome over the Yukon grew in extent and severity, creating all the record lows. But a dramatic change was to occur later in February: the westerlies relaxed, the cold air spilled through to eastern North America, resulting in severe cold as far south as Florida, and brought maritime air from the Pacific to the southern Yukon where the cold broke for a few days. At Snag, the mercury even rose to a more civilized plus 45°F.

*Above: Toole's team benighted near Snag.*

*Below: Christmas cheer at the Snag weather station.*

How did -81.4°F feel? Most Canadians never experience temperatures lower than -50°F. Blezard and Toole repeatedly said there was a considerable difference between -50°F and -80°F.

The following anecdotes, pieced together from station correspondence with the regional office in Edmonton that winter, as well as from recent interviews with the two observers, give us a glimpse of what life was like for the frozen 16 at Snag during the winter of 1946-47. Says Blezard:

> At 80°F below, the talking of the Indians and barking of dogs in the village could be plainly heard at the Airport four miles away. An aircraft that flew over Snag that day at 10,000 feet was first heard when over 20 miles away; and later, when overhead, still at 10,000 feet, the engine roar was deafening. It woke everyone who was sleeping at the time; because they thought the airplane was landing at the airport.

Anyone who has ever skated outside or gone for long walks in the dead of winter knows that sound carries far and clear the colder it gets. That is because, ordinarily, sound spreads obliquely upward over our heads and is therefore not heard very far away. But, in very cold, stable air, the inversion bends the sound waves back toward the earth where they tend to hug the ground. Further, audibility is improved by the absence of turbulence or wind. In the end, conversations usually heard 30 metres away can be heard more than a kilometre away if the air is clear.

There are even more extraordinary sounds: for instance, when outside, staff at Snag could not only see, but hear, their moist breath solidify to ice in a hissing or faint swishing sound. From his home in Watson Lake, Yukon, Toole recalled the experience:

> It was unique to see a vapour trail several hundred yards long pursuing one as he moved about outside. Becoming lost was of no concern. As an observer walked along the runway, each breath remained as a tiny, motionless mist behind him at head level. These patches of human breath fog remained in the still air for three to four minutes, before fading away. One observer even found such a trail still marking his path when he returned along the same path 15 minutes later.

There were other cold-weather experiences mentioned by the observers at Snag. For days, a small fog or steam patch would appear over the sled dogs, at a height of 15 to 20 feet. It would disappear only in the warm part of the day when the temperature warmed up to 60 below. A piece of thin ice, when broken, sounded exactly like breaking glass; and a chunk of ice was so cold that, when brought into a warm room, it took five full minutes before there was any trace of moisture, even when held in the hand.

Blezard recalls antics around the camp during the cold spell:

> We threw a dish of water high into the air, just to see what would happen. Before it hit the

ground, it made a hissing noise, froze and fell as tiny round pellets of ice the size of wheat kernels. Spit also froze before hitting the ground. Ice became so hard the axe rebounded from it. At such temperatures, metal snapped like ice; wood became petrified, and rubber was just like cement. The dog's leather harness couldn't bend or it would break.

Toole added a few of his memories of sounds and nature during the cold snap:

> Ice in the White River about a mile east of the airport, cracked and boomed loudly, like gun fire. During the bitter cold, you would go days without seeing any wildlife, apart from ravens, rabbits, mice, snowbirds and ptarmigans. Cold air generated intense radio static much like the crackling during a thunderstorm.

Life in the cold had its complications. Surprisingly, heating the log buildings was less of a problem that one might expect. In a memo to his superior, Dr. Tom How, officer-in-charge of the Edmonton forecast office, Toole wrote about the hardships that winter:

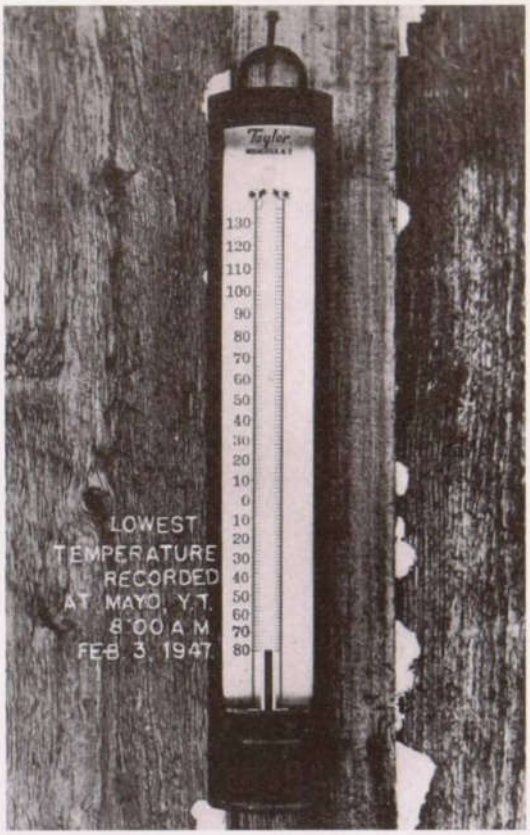
> With constant stoking of the furnace the temperature of the barracks remained quite comfortable. The only uncomfortably cool room in the barracks was the common room, this was due to a large hole, 8 feet by 4 feet, being in the ceiling. The hole was caused by the freezing and bursting of one of the water pipes on December 2nd. Despite promises by the RCAF at Whitehorse that a carpenter was coming up on the first available aircraft to fix the ceiling, the temporary patch, put on by two of the radio personnel and myself, remains.

*Weathermen near Snag airport, February 1947.*

Toole wrote further:

> No provisions have been made for supplying the barracks with water for drinking or washing purposes. This, as you can see, has made it

*RCAF plane at Snag airport; a link to "outside".*




G.A. McIntyre, Mayo

*Photographic proof, taken at Mayo, 3 February 1947.*

> almost impossible for personnel to wash more than once a day and has terminated showers or baths. ... After seconds outdoors, nose hairs freeze rigidly and your eyes tear. Facial hair and glasses become thickly crusted with frozen breath ... you had to be careful not to inhale too deeply for fear of freezing or scalding one's lungs. The only other discomfort caused by the cold were numerous cases of beginning frostbite, particularly the familiar "ping" as the tip of one's nose froze. One only had to remain outside for 3 or 4 minutes with face exposed before cheeks, nose and ears were frozen.

During the extreme cold, outdoor chores had to be postponed. The weather staff felt fortunate that observing duties kept them outside only for two minutes every hour. On the other hand, the enlisted men were outside for relatively long bouts, hauling wood to keep the barracks, the garage and powerhouse warm. They had to take extra precautions to prevent throat and lung burn from over-exertion in the frigid air. Says Blezard, "It was easy to freeze your nose at -70°F without even knowing it was cold. At -30°F you feel it coming".

Beating the "cold blues" was another challenge. Toole busied himself during the cold spell by checking his trap lines; others played cards, boxed, listened to classical music, read and talked. And the talk was about the wretched cold.

In the midst of the cold spell, there was no re-supply by RCAF planes from Whitehorse for several weeks. Blezard recalled: "All we ate was fish and bacon and eggs ... there was very little meat ... we lived mostly on beans for the last five days."

Starting machinery was also a chore. And, getting an engine started was no guarantee it could continue to run. At that temperature, the oil and the transmission fluid coagulated into something approaching a solid. Also, truck tires could splay open when they hit ruts. But the weather instruments, apart from the thermometers, all seemed to work in the cold.

How does the Snag record stand compared with the rest of the world? Being the North American record, it beats every official temperature reading in Canada and in the United States. The Snag record beat the previous lowest Canadian temperature of -77.9°F, recorded on 11 January 1911 at Fort Vermilion, Alberta (still Western Canada's lowest official temperature, though), as well as the lowest temperature ever recorded in the United States. That was -79.8°F recorded on 23 January 1971 at Prospect Creek, Alaska, a camp along the Alaskan pipeline in the Endicott Mountains. For comparison, the table on page 33 shows official record low temperatures for the Canadian provinces and territories. Interestingly, in the Arctic Islands, the lowest temperature ever reported was -69.2°F at Lake Hazen, a special International Geophysical Year observing station, on 4 January 1958.

Unofficially, however, temperatures lower than -81°F have been reported. On 7 January 1982, two temporary sites near Fort Nelson, in northeastern British Columbia, reported temperatures of -96°F and -92°F, in connection with a permafrost study; while the temperature at Fort Nelson airport weather station was -43.6°F. The extreme temperatures were attributed to intense cold air in mountain valleys during a long, cold, clear night.

Will Snag remain North America's cold spot? Only time will tell. But one thing is for certain, weather observers will no longer have to mark thermometer sheaths when temperatures fall below -80°F. Now, all official alcohol thermometers in Canada have markings to -94°F, a thermometer redesign due to the coldest day in Canadian history. ◆

*David W. Phillips is Senior Climatologist, Environment Canada, Downsview, Ontario. He has written several publications on the climate of Canada and frequently appears as a commentator on Canadian radio and television.*

# *Pictures from Canadian Attics*

On a bone-chilling Saturday morning in November 1914 a cold crowd of children, grownups and dogs assembled on windswept Portage Avenue in Winnipeg, Manitoba, to watch Eaton's Santa Claus Parade pass by. On that frosty morning Winnipeg photographer H.J. Metcalfe set up his camera near the entrance to the Happyland amusement grounds and shot over the heads of the crowd as a waving Santa passed in a horse-drawn Noah's Ark with a brass band following behind. A minute later he took a second shot as the floats passed on up the street and into history.

**Canadian attics and family photograph albums** contain many forgotten treasures of times past. Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or fascinatingly ordinary, in the long history of our country? If you have an old family photograph that you think might help to fill in the picture of Canada's past, have it copied at your local photo shop and send it to **The Beaver, "Pictures from Canadian Attics", #478-167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B OT6.** Include a brief description of the picture with its date and location. Identify people in the picture, if possible. We will publish the best entries and provide a fee of $25 for every photo used. Remember, don't send the priceless original. Have an inexpensive copy made at your local camera shop, pack it carefully and include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you want it returned.

# Misty, Technicolour Memories

BY TINA LOO

**MARGARET'S MUSEUM**
*Director, Mort Ransen.*
*Featured players:*
*Helena Bonham-Carter, Clive Russell, Kate Nelligan and Kenneth Welsh.*
*Film released to theatres in 1995 and now available on video.*

**THE GLACE BAY MINERS' MUSEUM**
*By Sheldon Currie.*
*Breton Books, Wreck Cove, Cape Breton, 1995. $12.95.*

*Margaret's Museum* is a beautiful film. Given its opening, which takes the audience soaring about the autumnal Cape Breton highlands to the sound of the Rankin Family, and the coal-smudged (Merchant) Ivory-girl good looks of its star Helena Bonham-Carter, the film might be mistaken for a production of the Nova Scotia tourism bureau. But as the camera zooms in to tell the story of life in Reserve Mines, Cape Breton, in the 1940s, imperfections appear: a landscape scarred by mineworks; broken-down company houses, and broken-down people like Margaret's mother and grandfather.

The tension between the beauty of the land and the suffering of the people who live there recurs in a variety of forms: the dark subterranean existence in the mines contrasts with the light airiness of Margaret's and Neil's fantastic house on the headland; the vitality of youth, symbolized by Neil's giant stature ("the biggest bugger I ever seen"), Margaret's sexuality, and her adolescent brother Jimmy's carbonated hormones, contrasts with the omnipresence of despair and death, represented by Margaret's widowed mother's bitterness and her grandfather's gurgled breathing and congested lungs.

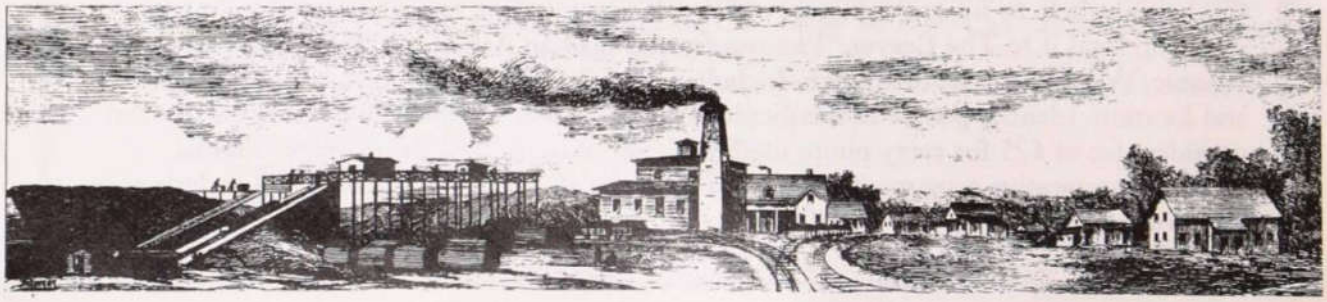
All of this underpins one of the film's central messages: that there can be strength, dignity, love – even beauty – in poverty, struggle and sure death. In emphasizing the nobility of the working class, the makers of *Margaret's Museum* tell us an old familiar story, but one that is nonetheless effective, if the Genie Awards and the packed houses are any indication.

But while it is clear what the Reserve miners and their families were struggling for – survival – what they struggled *against* is less apparent. Was it the mine? The company store? Poverty? Disability? Fate? All these things are named in the film, but their real opponents are largely unseen: the mine owners and shareholders interested in company profits, and the consumers of coal in faraway Toronto and Boston, interested in heating their houses for the lowest possible price.

In elevating the struggle of the miners and their families, *Margaret's Museum* tells us one part of their story but forgets about the others. This is particularly ironic in a film whose basis is a short story about how we remember the past. Sheldon Currie, an English professor at St. Francis-Xavier University, first published *The Glace Bay Miners' Museum* as a short story in 1979. A book by same name, meant as Currie's contribution toward a screenplay, appeared 1995. Born into a coalmining family, Currie is writing about his own community, but he is also offering an alternative to the official history told at the Glace Bay Miners' Museum in Sydney and celebrated by popular singer Rita MacNeil. Like MacNeil's music, the museum celebrates miners and the work of mining; but it does so by downplaying their relationships with the mine owners. The conflict-ridden past of the Cape Breton coal mines is flattened, minimized, and ultimately sanitized.

In contrast, Currie chose to remember the miners and mining life by placing class conflict in the foreground of his story. But instead of focusing on the union hall or the picket line, he seats us around the kitchen table, telling us about life in Reserve from Margaret's point-of-view, and that of the town's daughters, wives, and girlfriends; the people left behind every day to worry and wait for the sound of the siren. For Sheldon Currie, mining is a way of life, and the class relations which fundamentally shape it can't be shed at the end of the shift, like the miner's pitlamp and his helmet, or washed away in the company shower. Instead, they permeate and shape everyone's experience: miners and owners, union supporters and company men, young, old, men, women, and children.

The relationship of these miners and their families to the owners and to larger economic forces of capitalism was what made them who they were. It



defined what it was to live in Reserve Mines, and it's impossible to tell that story without placing it in this larger context of power.

Without this kind of framing, the misfortune and conflict that beset places like Reserve Mines seem unconnected to anything else; it's discrete, individualized. Suffering was just the way things were, a miner's lot in life. Take Margaret's grandfather for instance. Crippled by black lung, he is a symbol of the suffering endured by miners. In the film, he is an old codger who keeps a diary in Gaelic and has a fondness for Neil's piping. In the story, however, Currie uses his language and music as much more than costuming. They are links to an unbroken past of oppression for poor Scots, something that for Margaret's grandfather began on the field of Culloden in 1745 at the hands of the British, and ended up in the coal mines of Cape Breton at the hands of companies like BESCO (the British Empire Steel Company). Or take Margaret's kid brother, Jimmy in the film, Ian in the book. In both treatments, they are the objects of the mine manager's daughter's affections. But while young Jimmy's doomed puppy-love stands for the death of innocence in the mines, the older Ian's relationship with the manager's daughter is meant to show how all aspects of life in Reserve are politicized, for he is one of the union's organizers. The union itself is entirely missing from the film: the only hint of larger tensions in Reserve is Uncle Angus' burning down the company store – a lone act of frustration.

All this may seem like a way of saying I liked the book better than the movie. But my point isn't so much that the movie left out things in the book – that's always the case, and it isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's what was left out and the larger implications of those absences that concerns me. In talking about workers and their struggle without reference to the bosses and the larger configuration of power that placed limits on what could be, *Margaret's Museum* leaves the impression that the past just happens. It's something to be endured; no one's to blame, and there's nothing people can really do about it. A story like this denies the fact that people make history in conditions not of their own making, and have the potential to change it.

*Tina Loo teaches history at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia.*

# Written on the Land

BY CHRISTOPHER MOORE

**BOWERING'S B.C.**
**A Swashbuckling History**
*By George Bowering.*
*Viking Press,*
*Toronto, Ontario, 1996.*
*420 pp., illus. $32.00.*

**NOVA SCOTIA**
**SHAPED BY THE SEA**
**A Living History**
*By Lesley Choyce.*
*Viking Press,*
*Toronto, Ontario, 1996.*
*304 pp., illus. $29.99.*

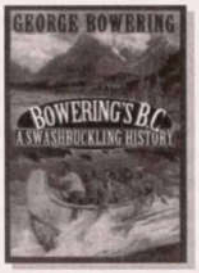
"The trouble is, it is very difficult, to be both poet and an historian" says George Bowering at the start of this book. If anyone could bring it off, it ought to be Bowering.

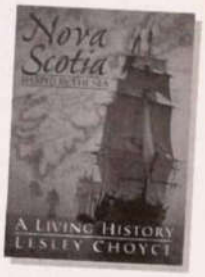
Poet, critic, novelist, Bowering is also an instinctive searcher and researcher. He knows his way around his native province, and he seems to read history in the ground. He's read the books, too. He's learned that "archivists are very pleasant people." He's been assembling materials for decades. He even knows that history is "full of holes".

Can the poet make it new? The publisher was hoping he would. Appearing alongside Lesley Choyce's *Nova Scotia: Shaped By the Sea*, *Bowering's B.C.* may be launching a whole Viking series of poets' histories. Bowering gives it his best shot.

"Here is a description of some land," he writes in the early pages of *Bowering's B.C.* and, indeed, he proceeds to describe some sagebrush-and-rattler country near Kamloops. He offers surprising literary references. He lists what he did not learn at U.B.C. and he calls people from south of the border "USAmericans". His bibliography contains "children's books, camping guides, etc., lots of stuff you don't see in a lot of histories." The same ironical, conversational character who inhabits his stories and poems tells this history. Anyone who knows Bowering will guess there's more baseball and poetry here than most histories of B.C. offer.

"If that is what it takes to be a historian, I would rather be a novelist," declares Bowering at one point, skipping the details of one particularly tangled political scandal. That's one voice he might have listened to more consistently. Just when historians have opened up history by renouncing the faith in Political Biography as History, the poet is surprisingly devout. Bowering's accounts of every single B.C. premier since Confederation are carefully done,




but I often wished he had heeded Kurt Vonnegut's "Pay no attention to Caesar. Caesar hasn't got a clue what's really going on." It is when Bowering impersonates some dead concept of the Historian that I miss the poet's voice.

On balance, I'll still demand that the historians make history new, for it *is* difficult to be both poet and historian. I think the gap overwhelmed Lesley Choyce, a relentlessly cheery guy whose Nova Scotia history concludes grouchily that "history is an unhappy business." But *Bowering's B.C.* has endless funny angles from a guy who knows his place and keeps his sense of wonder. Here is a description of some province.

*Former British Columbian Christopher Moore now lives in Toronto.*

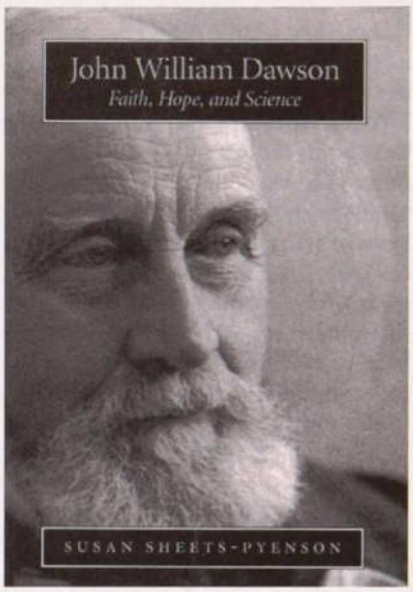
# Born Serious

BY THOMAS SINCLAIR

**JOHN WILLIAM DAWSON**
**Faith, Hope, and Science**
*By Susan Sheets-Pyenson.*
*McGill-Queen's University Press,*
*Montreal and Kingston, 1996.*
*274 pp., illus. $44.95.*

One feels exhausted just reading about the life of John William Dawson, a man of prodigious energy and possessed of an immoderate work ethic, resulting in a lifetime of productivity that can only be described as remarkable. The mental and moral source of this fecundity is only briefly analyzed in this otherwise thorough biography by Susan Sheets-Pyenson, and is attributed to a Presbyterian upbringing as well as a strong sense of duty to parents, country and God. There are however other clues – a young Dawson wondered "'why he so preferred devoting his leisure to useful pursuits rather than to idle pleasure like most young men of his age". One suspects that he was simply born serious.

Through a series of fortuitous contacts with the leading mid-nineteenth-century naturalists of the day and, of course, by dint of hard work, Dawson rose to become one of the world's pre-eminent geologists and paleontologists, culminating with the publication of *Acadian Geology* in 1855. While this work was truly his magnum opus, with




long-term practical implications for the coal mining economy of his native Nova Scotia, and, as well, a highly regarded scientific treatment of the natural history of the region, it is not only, or even especially for this that Dawson's life is remembered. For Dawson was first and foremost an educator and scientist, who began his professional life as the first Superintendent of the Nova Scotia school system and ended it following a forty-year principalship, building the reputation of McGill University; along the way creating the Royal Society of Canada and heading the prestigious American and British Associations for the Advancement of Science.

The McGill that Dawson faced in 1855 bore no resemblance to the fine institution that now exists – the campus consisted of "two blocks of unfinished and partly ruinous buildings ... the university possessed no library, no museum, and only a few pieces of old-fashioned scientific apparatus." This he transformed into the modern and respected institute of higher learning we know today, through the artful acquisition of endowment money by advancing applied or practical science to the benefit of the surrounding community. Dawson was knighted for his efforts at McGill and the University is his testimonial.

Dawson's life was not without its reverses, most of which were the direct result of his determined attempts to reconcile natural science with his deeply-held religious beliefs. Dawson was strongly opposed to the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin and it was his misfortune to consistently attack it at a time when its revolutionary import was most joyously embraced by the conventional scientists of the day. The result was that Dawson was for a time isolated from his mainstream colleagues, would not publish in their journals, and resorted to writing "popular" pieces which, though they were well received by the public, could not have possibly substituted for the respect of his peers. Later in life, all was forgiven, it seems, and Dawson demonstrated his great organizational skills culminating in the formation of the Royal Society of Canada.

There is very little of Dawson's own writing in this book; the author has chosen instead to interpret all of his thinking for us, and while this may be justified due to the arcane nature of his discipline, more bits of the "Victorian" prose he produced would have been welcomed.

*Thomas Sinclair is a scientist living in Winnipeg.*

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# Highways to the Past

BY PAULA E. KIRMAN

**ALBERTA HISTORY ALONG THE HIGHWAY**
**A Traveller's Guide to the Fascinating Facts, Intriguing Incidents and Lively Legends in Alberta's Past**
*By Ted Stone.*
*History along the Highway Books /Red Deer College Press,*
*Red Deer, Alberta, 1996.*
*304 pp., illus. $16.95.*

**PARK PRISONERS**
**The Untold Story of Western Canada's National Parks, 1915-1946**
*By Bill Waiser.*
*Fifth House Publishers,*
*Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1995.*
*294 pp., illus. $27.95.*

I don't know if many Alberta residents or tourists really bother to stop and read the historical markers that adorn the highway as they drive along on their vacation or business trip. Neither did Ted Stone, who, after actually noticing the historical markers while travelling through Alberta, thought about how many times he had passed them without even wondering what they said.

Using resources from the Glenbow Museum in Calgary and the Provincial Archives in Edmonton, Stone's book is designed especially for travellers, and includes many photographs and a comprehensive list of Alberta museums. The contents are conveniently broken down into geographical segments, illustrated by a map at the beginning of each section. Bold newspaper-style headings accompany the locations of the historical markers, followed by brief but detailed summaries of what occurred at those places in the past.

What Stone accomplishes with *Alberta History Along the Highway* above anything is exactly what the title implies: a chronicle of Alberta's history as documented by roadside markers. It is a history that Stone points out is comparatively short compared to other places, but not without its wild and intriguing moments, as well as being all too frequently ignored, even though the details are available in the most obvious places.

Every year thousands of tourists flock to Banff, Jasper, and Yoho. These national parks are known for their beauty and natural splendour. Yet parks that today appear calm and serene were once home to labour camps. During the world wars and the Great Depression of this century, aliens, relief workers, transients, conscientious objectors, along with members of the Japanese community and German prisoners of war, were sent to the park areas to live and work, often surrounded by armed guards and barbed wire.

Even though some physical evidence remains, the true story of these labour camps was little known until recently. Historian Bill Waiser chronicles the internment and lives of these people in his book *Park Prisoners*. In an examination of groups considered at that time to be threats to society, Waiser documents where they were located, how they were treated, and how they were employed.

Each chapter is devoted to a specific group of prisoners, discussing their living facilities, work relationships with each other and leisure activities. Archival black and white photographs illustrate both internees and the camps themselves.

Reading this book should not ruin personal enjoyment of our national parks, or discourage anyone from visiting them. Instead, it will perhaps help visitors examine their surroundings in a new light, especially as they walk along the roads that were built by the hands and sweat of those once considered dangerous and subversive and not fit to mix with the rest of Canadian society.

*Paula E. Kirman is an Edmonton freelance writer.*


## THE PIERRE BERTON AWARD

CANADA'S NATIONAL HISTORY SOCIETY established an award in 1994 for distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history. Canadian writer and popular author, Pierre Berton, was the first recipient. Mr. Berton agreed to having his name associated with the award in subsequent years.

In addition to Mr. Berton, other recipients of the Award are:

**James H. Gray, Calgary, 1995**
**Jacques Lacoursière, Quebec City, 1996**

Individuals or organizations that have helped popularize Canadian history, through such means as publications, film, radio and television, theatre or volunteer service may be nominated.

Nominations are now being accepted for the 1997 Pierre Berton Award. In addition to a name and address of the nominee, nominations must be accompanied by detailed information in support of the candidate. A biography or curriculum vitae, newspaper or magazine articles, or letters of support outlining the achievements of the nominee would be welcome.

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# Canada and the Jews

BY ABRAHAM ARNOLD

**SEARCH OUT THE LAND**
**The Jews and the Growth of Equality in British Colonial America, 1740-1867**
*By Sheldon J. Godfrey and Judith C. Godfrey.*
*McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 1995.*
*396 pp. $34.95.*

Sheldon and Judith Godfrey recount the travails of Jews in the "Mother Country" as well as in the colonies which became Canada. They have searched out the English laws governing Jews and other dissenters from Anglicanism and have explained their effect in the home country as well as in the North American colonies. While the debates on dissenters are not unknown, the book does well in bringing together the most complete account possible on how the Jews won civil and political rights in Canada before Confederation. This book is thus an important work of Canadian Jewish history and a worthy addition to Canadian history.

The Godfreys have also searched out the first Jews in the colonies which became Canada, from the prosaic presence of several at the founding of Halifax on Chebucto Bay in 1749, to the spine-tingling capture of Ezekiel Solomons by Indians at Fort Michilimackinac in 1763. Solomons' story is not unknown, but the authors are right in calling this episode part of Canada's "forgotten history". They cite Solomons among a dozen Jews of that period who did not rate inclusion in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.

This issue of recognition of these early Jews becomes confused, however, when the Godfreys suggest earlier interpretations of this period leave the impression that before 1880 the Jewish presence in Canada made no impact. Previous works of Canadian Jewish history were largely written from the perspective of how the Jewish community was founded and how the Jews began to play a part in Canadian politics. Thus it is Aaron Hart and the first Jewish family dynasty he founded who get most of the attention; in fact some of Hart's descendants helped to compile that history, *e.g.* Arthur Daniel Hart, *The Jew in Canada* (1926). There were no known descendants of Ezekiel Solomons, however, until the Godfreys searched one out.

The authors demonstrate why, for more than a century after 1740, the British Government tolerated Protestant dissenters and Jews in the colonies and granted them rights which they did not enjoy in the home country.

What becomes clear in this book is that the enforcement of laws and regulations for Jews and other dissenters in the colonies, particularly in regard to oaths of office, depended largely on the officials in charge. This caused situations which frequently had an adverse affect on the rights of Jews.

In 1863, for example, when Aaron Hart was appointed Postmaster at Trois Rivières, no oath was required. And when Eliezer Levy received a commission as a notary in Montreal in 1866 the authorities erased the words "in Christ" from his appointment. Further, in 1768, when John Franks was appointed "Surveyor of Chimneys" for Quebec, Montreal and Trois Rivières, making him, in effect, chief of fire prevention for the province, he was sworn in on the basis of "State Oaths for Persons of the Jewish Persuasion" and used the words "upon the true faith of a Jew".

The Jews were first challenged over taking an oath according to their own religion in regard to land grants in Upper Canada, but this oath disability was lifted soon after 1800. In fact, in 1808, when Ezekiel Hart was having problems with the oath in the Lower Canada Assembly, Moses David, in Upper Canada, was able to take office as a coroner without using the Christian form of oath. There were thus


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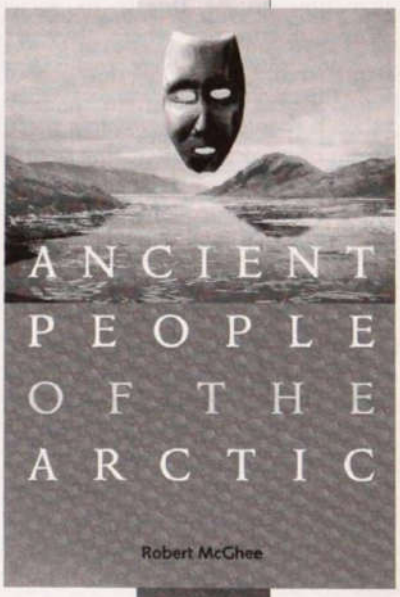


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precedents in both provinces for a Jew to take an oath according to his conscience. It is thus confirmed that Ezekiel Hart's trouble in the Assembly (he was twice elected and twice expelled) arose primarily due to the politics of the times in Lower Canada.

Two decades later the oath issue again reared its head in Quebec in regard to several Jews being appointed as justices of the peace. The prime mover in resolving the question was Ezekiel's son, Samuel Becancour Hart. When it was again alleged that Jews could not take the proper form of oath, S.B. Hart led the effort to petition the Assembly for relief of Jewish disabilities. The result was the act of 1832, which declared that Jews had equal rights. In 1833 Samuel B. became the first Jew sworn in as a justice of the peace – by a French oath commissioner (the English oath commissioners still refused to do so).

The Godfreys present the most comprehensive account ever given of the 1830s oath controversy and its resolution. They also conclude correctly that the Jews of Lower Canada "owed their equality to the French Canadians rather than to the British." They then link the modification of the Christian oath in the other provinces with the development of the concept of responsible government in the 1830s and 40s.

One last episode on the oath occurred in 1860, when Selim Franklin, an English-born Jew elected to the Assembly of Vancouver Island, was challenged for not taking the Christian form of oath. Franklin was not deprived of his seat and the Godfreys' account of his experience is grounded in sound documentation. However, they fail to make clear that some members of the assembly shared a veiled anti-Jewish prejudice.

The last chapter of this book deals commendably with the theme "From Toleration to Equality". Thomas Paine is cited to the effect that "toleration is not the opposite of intolerance but its counterfeit [and] both are despotisms."

*Abraham Arnold has done extensive research and writing on Canadian Jewish history. He recently published a book: "Judaism: Myth, Legend, History and Custom, from the Religious to the Secular".*

# Value for Money

BY LAIRD RANKIN

**NO PRICE TOO HIGH**
**Canadians and the Second World War**
*By Terry Copp with Richard Nielsen.*
*McGraw-Hill Ryerson,*
*Whitby, Ontario, 1995.*
*256 pp., illus. $39.99.*

For the millions of Canadians who were either toddlers or not yet around during the Second World War, or whose war experience has been confined to the couch and television viewing of such epic battles as the Gulf War, the Oka standoff, or, worst of all, the O.J. Simpson trial, here is a painless way to learn about a sometimes painful, often tragic, yet a wholly extraordinary page from Canada's past: our country's immense and noble contribution to the Second World War, both at home and abroad.

It is a considerable accomplishment. In the foreword, Barnett Danson, a former Minister of Defence and Second World War veteran himself, summarizes the achievement this way:

> The marvel was that this nation of some 11 million people, scattered over a vast land mass, saw almost a million of its sons and daughters voluntarily enlist in defence of their democratic way of life. To transform a small virtually unequipped military into a powerful army, navy and air force was a remarkable achievement. To accomplish this while developing a powerful industrial sector and expanding food and raw material production was a miracle.

The Second World War changed everything. This book will help you understand and appreciate how and why this came about and, more importantly, what happened in between. It is useful knowledge, for looking at that war from the rather jaded, baby-boom or X-generation vantage points, it seems all the more remarkable that such patriotism ever existed, that such spirit did reign supreme, or that God and country were the paramount concerns and worthy of human sacrifice. Today such passionate signs seem in remission, or rarely overt.

*No Price Too High* is the print version of the television series of the same name. Often, it is a first-person account rather than a second-hand telling of the tales, the battles, the victories and defeats. This liberal use of extracts from letters, diaries and other forms of the written word are effective. They add an extra punch and perspective to the joy or sorrow. Along with the photographs, illustrations and maps, they also serve to enhance Terry Copp's narrative,

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Copp is a respected military historian who has done much to "popularize" the genre. His is a highly readable and engaging style. He has a happy combination of scholarship and style. He also knows his mission here: to provide the context, to set the framework and to do the analysis and interpretation, but let the veterans add the "colour commentary". A particularly fine example of his professionalism is his account of the tragic Dieppe raid which he readily admits "has been criticized by participants and historians since 1942." He politely reminds both camps, and informs us readers, that "everyone believed that the raid had a good chance of success" and foresaw no tragedy, certainly nothing like what happened. His straightforward account of the raid itself is rendered all the more powerful and moving by the inclusion of veterans' accounts and on-site photographs. Combined, they add new meaning to the term "group dynamic".

*No Price Too High* represents everything that a popular history should be. It seeks to bring this story to a wide audience and is therefore rightly aimed at the general reader rather than the specialist. The book is well organized and designed. The generous use of illustrative material, like the personal extracts, gives an added dimension to the story. Above all, it is an amazing story well told through a variety of voices. It deserves the wide readership it seeks.

*Laird Rankin is Vice-President and Secretary of Canada's National History Society.*


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# History with a camera

BY DAVID ROZNIATOWSKI

**ENCOUNTERS**
**Early Images of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples from the Library Collections of the Geological Survey of Canada**
*By John A. Stevens.*
*General Store Publishing House, Burnstown, Ontario, 1996.*
*119 pp., illus. $18.95.*

**FLAPJACKS & PHOTOGRAPHS**
**The Life Story of the Famous Camp Cook and Photographer Mattie Gunterman**
*By Henri Robideau.*
*Polestar, Vancouver, British Columbia, 1995.*
*204 pp., illus. $24.95.*

The photographs in *Encounters* exist because of the foresight of some person or persons who included in the mandate of the Geological Survey of Canada a directive to the Survey's geologists to observe and record not only landforms and mineral deposits, but virtually everything they encountered. By the time photography had become a viable recording technique, the Survey was concentrating its work in Western Canada and the Arctic, hence the predominance of images from these areas, although some photographs of aboriginal people from Nova Scotia and Quebec are included.

Whether intentionally or not, the title of this collection evokes association with the phrase, "close encounters of the third kind", and for both the aboriginal peoples and their visitors from the outside world, contact must sometimes have been as strange and disorienting as anything in the realm of science fiction. The idea is reinforced by the latest dated image in the book, a photograph of an Inuit snow house at night taken in 1964 by E.A. Schiller. The snow house is lit by an unseen source of illumination, so that the glowing dome bears an eerie resemblance to an extraterrestrial spacecraft that has just touched down.

The pictures presented here cover a period from 1887 to 1964. Acculturation or transmission and assimilation of cultural influences was, in the early period, predominantly one-sided, as attested by several photographs of Indians posed, not always at ease but still conscious of their native dignity, in the costume of white people. For obvious climatic reasons, the Inuit of the Arctic retained their traditional costume, in which there is much to interest not only the ethnologist and anthropologist, but also the historian of Inuit art, since the Inuit women's skill in cutting out and arranging patterns for sewing was to become the basis of their success as graphic artists in later generations. Compare, for example, the splendidly elaborate decoration of the women's parkas in the photograph on page 90 and 91 with the decorative designs in contemporary Inuit prints.

The photographs are accompanied by texts extracted from original reports by members of the Geological Survey, and well known names associated particularly with Canadian Arctic history, such as Diamond Jenness and J.B. Tyrrell occur. An editor's note appended to the introduction contains an interesting caveat to the effect that the texts are presented as originally written, and that even though they may contain attitudes and assumptions about native peoples that are no longer acceptable, no alterations in the texts have been made in the interests of historical accuracy. Through this compromise, the causes of historical authenticity and political correctness have presumably been served.

The sole fault of this otherwise excellent collection is that it is presented without order or organization, whether with regard to chronology, theme, or any other frame of reference.

Mattie Gunterman was the epitome of Emersonian self-reliance. Born

Ida Madeline Warner in La Crosse, Wisconsin, in 1872, she early discarded her formal, baptismal names in favour of "Mattie", the name by which she would be known for the rest of her life. Much of that life was spent in outdoor activities, ranging from photography and farming to running a trap-line. Mattie in fact credited her recovery from a sickly childhood to the rigorous, often itinerant life that she led with her husband Will Gunterman and their son Henry as they moved in search of work from Seattle to the mining and logging camps of the Lardeau Valley in British Columbia's Kootenay region. Her favourite saying was "Go out and get the good air and you'll be all right, regardless of what's wrong with you."

Mattie's early interest in photography was nurtured and encouraged by an uncle who was a professional photographer, and who taught her much of his craft. Her technical expertise and ingenuity is evident in many of her prints – in skilfully overlapped landscape images which imitate the effect of a wide-angle lens, or in a double portrait where the same sitter appears in two different poses simultaneously. Her photographs are a rich pictorial record of a life in which she met conditions of adversity with optimism and even humour, for although she worked 12 hours a day as a cook in the Lardeau Valley mining camps to help finance her photographic ventures, she still found time to enjoy social activities, from dances and masquerade parties to horse races. In one race, she herself rode the family horse to a second-place finish.

Several photographs show Mattie's flair for slapstick comedy, such as the before and after prints of a reputedly boozy farewell party in Seattle, a rollicking contrast to the traditionally dour portrait images associated with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photography.

Henri Robideau's brisk, enthusiastic text admirably complements the lifestyle of his subject and the selection of photographs which appear in the book. Considerable challenges have been met in restoring Mattie's prints to their present quality, for many of her early pictures suffered fading or damage from being glued into cardboard and newsprint scrapbooks, while others have had to be reproduced via modern contact prints from original glass-plate negatives. Anyone who has not had the pleasure of previously making Mattie's acquaintance through the travelling exhibition of her photographs which toured 14 galleries in Canada from 1976 to 1980 is in for a treat, and those who are already familiar with her work will gain new insights into a fascinating personality.

*David Rozniatowski is a Winnipeg librarian.*


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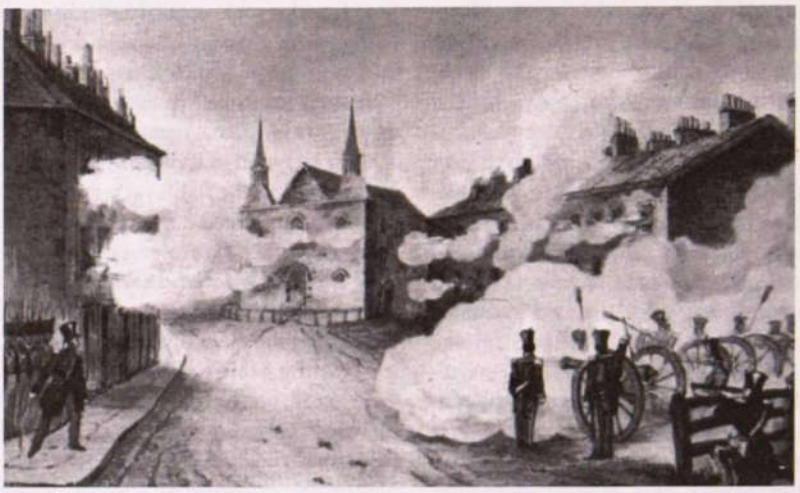
# Our American Cousins

For two hundred years, anti-Americanism has been as Canadian as apple pie ... er, maple syrup, ... yet J.L. Granatstein is apparently the first historian to attempt to chronicle it. To justify his own deep-seated convictions, Granatstein began work on *Yankee Go Home?*, a history of the persistent and pervasive American influences which threaten this country's independence. To his surprise, his research led him to conclude that Yankee-bashing in Canada has almost always been used by economic and political élites to resist change and hold on to power. Thus it is to be mistrusted.



*Fighting at St.-Eustache, northwest of Montreal, December 1837. From "Rebellion".*

The bulk of the book – not that there is anything bulky about it – deals with recent struggles, with chapters on rebuilding the post-war economy, coping with the Cold War, promoting national unity, restricting foreign investment, defending universities, harbouring draft-dodgers, funding artists and academics, and negotiating Free Trade. In each period Canadian nationalists, whether left or right in their politics, managed to massage national insecurities for their own particular purposes. However correct they may have been in their arguments or sincere they may have been in their defence of country and culture against encroachments from the south, they were nonetheless also advancing their own political and economic self-interests.

Personally, I continue to be amazed by this country's ambivalence toward the United States. Canadians who comfortably live in Florida or Arizona for several months each year, decry the violence of American society. Labour unionists who denounce all influences American, sing "Solidarity Forever" and "Joe Hill". Sports enthusiasts who wildly cheer baseball and football teams mostly made up of American mercenaries in Canadian uniforms, bemoan the exodus of Canadian hockey players to play on American teams. Writers who make news with their attacks on the United States, make money from American sales of their books. And most people who voice their concern over the loss of Canadian cultural identity seem unable to define that identity except in terms of what it is not, that is, not some bad things American.

So deeply entrenched is anti-Americanism in the Canadian psyche, it may be difficult for many readers to accept Granatstein's doubts about the motives of many who wave the banner of nationalism. My only regret is that, as a modern historian, he gives such short shrift to the nineteenth century, dealing with the whole of it in one thin chapter. There is much more to be told: about suppressing critics of the administration in early Upper Canada, about questioning the loyalty of those who championed democratic reform before and after the rebellions, about defeating various proponents of annexation, about raising the spectre of Manifest Destiny to stifle critics of Confederation, about using propaganda to promote building the railway, about false claims and false fears in all the arguments for economic protectionism. And what, I wonder, has been the role of anti-Americanism in the history of French Canada?

If your own prejudices do not prevent cross-border reading, I eagerly recommend two books I've read recently, each dealing with a specifically American subject, yet each highly relevant to our country. (Each also won major American awards for historical scholarship.)

*The Unredeemed Captive* tells of a Mohawk raid in 1704 on the frontier Puritan village of Deerfield in western Massachusetts. A number of settlers were captured, taken to Quebec and held hostage, all part of the developments of Queen Anne's War. Negotiations after the end of that war brought their eventual release and return to Deerfield. One girl, however, the daughter of the village parson, refused to return and instead remained to marry a native. Ultimately, between the families, there came a reconciliation of sorts. It is a marvelous book, not just as a fascinating human drama, but as an insightful study of cultures – Puritan settlers, colonial administrators, native peoples – dealing with conflict and with change.

*William Cooper's Town* has nothing to do with baseball. It studies a New

York state settlement just after the American Revolution. The founder, William Cooper, a Loyalist at heart who managed as a Quaker to stay out of the war, contrived to gain title to a tract of land and create a town, setting himself up as a sort of country squire who controlled the community with almost feudal authority. His rise, his rule and his fall is an intriguing tale in itself. And an added, quite extraordinary dimension to the story is the fact that the son, famed novelist James Fenimore Cooper, later wrote *The Pioneers*, his own fictional version of what happened to his father and his town.

Canadians may never have had a revolution like their American cousins, but they have had rebellions and they continue to write about them. For years Joseph Schull's *Rebellion* has been the only popular book describing the Lower Canadian rebellion. Long out of print, it is now available in a quality paperback edition. Read it, if you have not already done so. And then go deeper and read Allen Greer's *The Patriots and the People*, published a couple of years ago. It is the first serious attempt in over half a century, in English at least, to see that rebellion as a genuine revolution rather than an anomalous blip in the steady historical stream. And for Upper Canada, a new book, *Bluebloods & Rednecks*, looks at the 1830s from the perspective of eastern Ontario. I found it rather shallow in research and glib in judgment, but nonetheless valuable as a view of the province from an other-than-Toronto vantage point.

All this history need not be written for adults. I was personally delighted with Marianne Brandis's *Rebellion: A Novel of Upper Canada* and its telling of the tale of the Mackenzie uprising from the perspective of a young lad caught up in the middle of it. She has spun a splendid story, most of it true, all of it believable, and all of it very carefully researched. By way of contrast, another book for young people, *The Stone Orchard*, about the Fenian battle at Ridgeway, is marred by factual errors (there was no Toronto *Globe and Empire* newspaper until the 1890s, no Irish Republican Army until the twentieth century) and a barely credible story. To its credit, it does not gloss over the stench, pain and death of warfare.

### Books Cited


*Bluebloods & Rednecks*. By Charles D. Anderson. General Store Publishing. 263 pp. $19.95.

*The Patriots and the People*. By Allan Greer. University of Toronto Press. 385 pp. $50.00 hardcover, $19.95 paper.

*Rebellion*. By Joseph Schull. Macmillan Canada. 226 pp. $22.95 ($17.00 from Beaver Book Club).

*Rebellion: A Novel of Upper Canada*. By Marianne Brandis. Porcupine's Quill. 284 pp. $16.95.

*The Stone Orchard*. By Susan E. Merritt. Vanwell Publishing. 192 pp. $6.95.

*The Unredeemed Captive*. By John Demos. Vintage Books. 316 pp. $17.95.

*William Cooper's Town*. By Alan Taylor. Vintage Books. 549 pp. $23.50.

*Yankee Go Home?: Canadians and Anti-Americanism*. By J.L. Granatstein. Harper Collins. 317 pp. $28.00.



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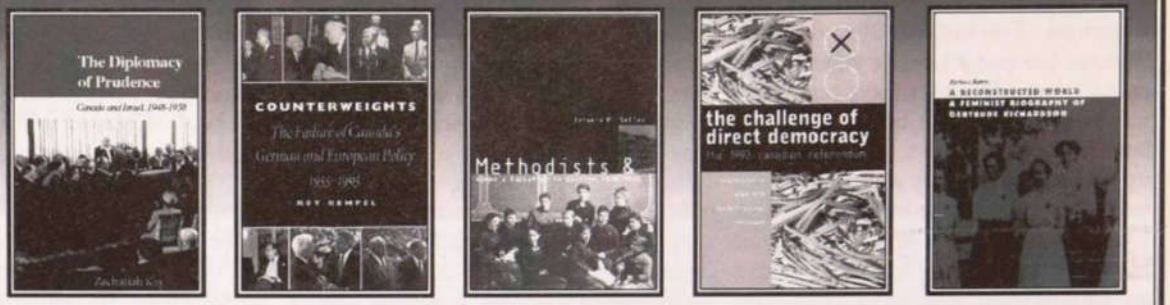


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**The Ice Hunters: A History of Newfoundland Sealing to 1914.** By Shannon Ryan (Breakwater Books, $34.95 hardcover, $24.95 paper). A thoroughly-researched and comprehensive background to the now-controversial Newfoundland sealing industry. Ryan is Professor of History at Memorial University, St. John's.

**Buffalo Nation: History and Legend of the North American Bison.** By Valerius Geist (Fifth House Publishers, $22.95). A lavishly illustrated history of the North American bison, its rise, fall and revival. Zoologist Valerius Geist offers some fascinating theories on the history of the great herds and the highly readable and informative text is enhanced with apt selections from the writings of "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Paul Kane, and others.

**John Cabot and Newfoundland.** By Allan F. Williams (Newfoundland Historical Society, $9.95). A special commemorative booklet on Cabot's voyages to the New World at the end of the fifteenth century to mark the 1997 500th anniversary. A useful and very readable account of the historical background and the voyages themselves that makes the most of what little information has come down to us.

**John E. Brownlee: A Biography.** By Franklin Foster (Foster Learning Inc., $24.00). The story of a Premier of Alberta who, after a fair start in the grain trade and public life, came to grief in a sensational scandal, described by the author as "one of the most vicious character assassinations in Canadian history".

**Louis "David" Riel: "Prophet of the New World".** By Thomas Flanagan (University of Toronto Press, $50.00 hardcover, $17.95 paper.) A revised version of the ground-breaking and controversial 1979 work that brings into sharp focus Riel's dream of establishing a new world religion on the plains of North America with him at its head.

**Canadians: A Battalion at War.** Edited by Roy J. Whitsed (Vanwell Publishing, $36.95). A composite history of the Queen's Own Rifles in the Second World War, made up of diaries, letters, memoirs and interviews. These are the stories of the men who did the fighting from Normandy to the Rhineland and they give a sobering taste of the war at ground level.

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A discount of at least 20% will be given on regular admission upon presentation of your membership card. All subscribers to *The Beaver* are automatically members of the Society. Some restrictions may apply.

Written for a popular audience by Professor Alan Williams, this small, well-illustrated, handsome volume offers a concise overview of John Cabot and his famous voyage of 1497. It is Cabot in a nutshell in a user-friendly form. Copies at $12.45 each (includes GST, shipping and handling) are available from:

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# The remarkable March family

I should like to add a personal note to the article "The Great Response" by Jonathan F. Vance [October/November 1996].

From 1910 onwards my family and I lived in the village of Farnborough, Kent. The March brothers had their home and studio there, and were friends of my parents. One of them, Dudley, used to visit us from time to time, and he developed an admiration for my sister Barbara, who had grown into a very good-looking girl.

In a newspaper interview in Ottawa in 1976, at the foot of the War Memorial, my sister said that when she was invited to visit the Marches she noticed the brothers would often sit and stare at her, which she found quite odd, and which became a sort of joke in our family. It was only after Vernon's death that she was told that he had used her as the model for the figure of Freedom on the Memorial.

I left England to join the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada in 1930. At that time U.K. apprentices, as we were called, joined under a five-year contract. If they survived it, at the end of that time they were granted five months of paid furlough, with steamer passage to the U.K. and back. In 1935 I returned to England with my wife and two young sons. As we passed the March house on a walk one day, Dudley saw us and invited us in for tea. Seated at a long dining table, our sons were subjected to the same intense scrutiny that my sister had experienced, from Sidney and most of the remaining seven brothers and one sister.

As Dudley took us through their yard to the studio, he shewed us several huge pieces of the bronze figures for the Memorial lying there. The Marches were an extraordinarily gifted family, all living together except for one married sister. They all worked on different facets of their arts – sculpture, architecture, painting, miniatures, foundry work, finishing, carving, jewellery, to name a few. Their parents were from Yorkshire. Their mother was an artist, though a frustrated one through having to rear 10 children. Her talent certainly came to fruition in them.

Besides the Canadian national and Victoria war memorials, the March brothers executed several others, both in Britain and overseas. They used my sister again as the model for the angel on the memorial in Lewes, Sussex, England.

Sadly, they are all gone now. Their house and studio have gone too, replaced by a commercial building.

**Graeme A. Beare,**
**Victoria, B.C.**

# 'Queen Mary'

The article "La Folleville's Place: Low life in the cabarets of old Montreal" [October/November 1996] reminded me of a story told me by Dr. D.H. Starkey about the planning of the Queen Mary Hospital by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. When it was proposed that the hospital be named after Queen Mary, as it was planned to be sited on that road, Dr. Starkey pointed out that the road was not named after the Queen, but after the tavern-keeper, nicknamed "Queen Mary" by the members of the Montreal showshoe clubs, who liked to relax in her establishment after an outing. "Tavern-keeper" was apparently not her only function.

**Robert A. Stairs,**
**Peterborough, Ontario.**

# The end of boyhood

I have a commentary on a story in the October/November 1996 issue "The Spirit of Adventure" by Lloyd Edward Kermode. On page 10, he writes, "Sebastian's own presence on the ship must be doubted (he would have been 13 or 14 years old)". I ask why would his presence be doubted on that account? "Three score years and ten" was the exception in those days when children of both sexes matured early. Someone wrote (how I wish I could remember who about whom) "If he isn't a man at 13, he never will be." Would not going to sea with father be part of his education?

In looking up my own genealogy, I have learned that one of my great-great-grandfathers, a sea-faring man in the nineteenth century (1800-1840) took his sons with him as soon as their mother permitted (and we all know how much influence women had in those days) or they could be useful. Hugh Reid was an independent Scottish fisherman who owned his own boat. Alas! He did it once too often – he and his three eldest sons never came back, leaving my great-great-grandmother with a family of daughters. She did, however, have one posthumous son, who became my great-grandfather. Though she died a pauper in her late sixties, he lived into this century and was in his later years a recipient of "The Pension" – the Scots term – much more pleasant-sounding than our "Old Age Security".

Thank you for *The Beaver* – life would be dull without it.

**Jessie I. McLean,**
**Winnipeg, Manitoba.**

# Canadians

I read "A Glorified Stall" by Newfoundland-born writer C.J. Fox in your August/September 1996 issue of *The Beaver* with interest mixed with a modicum of scepticism.

I, too, am a Newfoundlander by birth, one who served in the Newfoundland Constabulary, the Newfoundland Ranger Force and the R.C.M.P. from 1934 to 1969. I lived through and observed at first hand the struggle for confederation. Indeed, I can say in truth that I knew many of the personalities involved, including the champion of the toiling masses, Joseph R. Smallwood himself.

Now that we are nearing the half century mark as a province of Canada, I consider myself more of a Canadian than ever, and I believe that the greater number of my fellow Newfoundlanders feel as I do, the anti-confederate leader Peter Cashin and his followers to the contrary.

**Frank G. Mercer,**
**Bay Roberts, Newfoundland.**

# Canucks

In his article on Canadian English in the October/November 1996 issue, J.A. Davidson states that the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines "Canuck" as a derogatory term designating Canadians, especially French-Canadians. In fact, the current (ninth) edition of this dictionary has the following entry:

> Canuck *n. & adj.* esp. *Canad. colloq.* - *n.* a Canadian. - *adj.* Canadian [apparently from *Canada*]

The dictionaries published in Britain by Oxford University Press have in the last five years benefited from the input of Canadian lexicographers working on the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*. This entry reflects that Canadian input.

**Katherine Barber,**
**Editor-in-Chief,**
**Canadian Oxford Dictionary,**
**Don Mills, Ontario.**


## *The Beaver*
## APRIL / MAY 1997

*"I don't suppose that fat horror King will give you any chance of a letup in worry – little beast. How I hate him for the way he treated Julian. He is the one person in the whole world to whom I would do whatever harm I could!! ... I loathe liars and traitors. He is both."*

– Lady Evelyn Byng to R.B. Bennett, 1935.

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Peter Steven takes us on a guided tour from the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 to the On-To-Ottawa Trek of 1935, with a stop to harvest ice on Hamilton Bay in the 1890s.

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Christopher Moore

# Helms-Burton meet Godfrey-Milliken

One hot day in July 1996, I get a call out of the blue from a Member of Parliament. He wants to raise eighteenth-century history on the floor of the House of Commons. How can I resist?

John Godfrey tells me he wants to take the mickey out of the American "Helms-Burton" law, which would allow Americans to use American courts to pursue grievances over property seizures that resulted from the Cuban Revolution of 1959. Law-abiding Canadians doing business with Cuba would be among the first targets, and Godfrey thinks that history offers a way to focus Canadian complaints about the American action. Godfrey, who represents a Toronto riding, and another Liberal MP, Peter Milliken of Kingston, want to propose "Godfrey-Milliken" on the same principle as Helms-Burton. They would allow Canadians to use Canadian courts to pursue their grievances – over property seizures that resulted from the American Revolution of 1776. Both Godfrey and Milliken have Loyalist ancestors, and Godfrey intends to express an interest in the ancestral manor, Carter's Grove, now a restored plantation house at colonial Williamsburg in Virginia.

Godfrey has called me because I wrote a book called *The Loyalists* and he wants some historical data for his press release. I'm amused. I pull together and fax a sheet of examples of loyal Americans whose property was plundered for the benefit of friends of the American Revolution – including several from Senator Helms's state of North Carolina. Shortly after, the world learns of Godfrey-Milliken.

*American patriots, having tarred and feathered a Loyalist, force him to drink tea.*

One week later, I race down to Fort York in Toronto for the Godfrey-Milliken press conference, late but not concerned. In my experience, events that depend on the media rarely start on time. To my surprise, the parking lot is full of media trucks. Inside the ramparts, the press scrum is in full roar. This thing is hitting bigger than I had imagined. Suddenly I am surrounded by reporters wanting the American Revolution explained in no more than nine words. I realize these guys will record *anything* I say – so long as I am brief. But I try to stick to historical certainties: Godfrey and Milliken have every reason to say that American Loyalists were plundered by armed revolutionary bands as surely as the Cuban exiles were.

"To make this kind of thing work," Godfrey explains later, "you need a slow news day, you have to make it easy for the press, and it has to be kind of a giggle." He and Milliken have done it. It's summer, Fort York and the redcoats look great on TV and, with the CBC controlling the Olympics, the other networks are desperate for anything non-olympic. The reporters get the joke, and Godfrey-Milliken leads the CTV News at 11 P.M.

CTV also goes for a reaction. Its item includes a sleek young aide to Senator Helms, one who also seems to have grasped that you can tell the press anything about history if you say it authoritatively enough. Godfrey and Milliken have no case, he says imperially. The Loyalists were compensated – by the British.

That's easily refuted, I reflect. It's to the honour of the British, perhaps, that they assisted refugee Loyalists, but British assistance to the victims hardly exculpates American plunderers. I fax Godfrey the relevant clauses of the Treaty of Peace from 1783, detailing American obligations. But I assume the story has had its 15 minutes and is now old news.

In the days that follow, however, I find myself learning some new things about American diplomatic history. All the standard histories relate how the American Congress bound itself in the peace treaty to recommend to the states that they restore Loyalist property, and how the states ignored the "recommendation". The American histories sometimes note how this repudiation by the individual states, by proving the inability of the American government to make binding treaties,

was a small factor in the new American constitution of 1787, which greatly enhanced the authority of the national government in foreign affairs. For their part, Canadian histories tend to point out that this weighty change was no comfort to the Loyalists, who remained dispossessed of their old homes and properties.

Godfrey, however, faxes me a communication from the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. Within one day of the Godfrey-Milliken press conference, it had delivered to Senator Helms's office three single-spaced pages, solidly-researched and impeccably footnoted, on "Loyalist Claims". In 1802, it reports, the U.S. government agreed to pay Britain $3 million (about 40% of the annual U.S. budget that year) in settlement of claims for compensation stemming from the revolutionary war.

Are all the Canadian texts so wrong? Did the Americans actually pay up? In fact, no. Peter Moogk of the University of B.C., who is another of Godfrey's historical sources, quickly demonstrates this 1802 agreement was about commercial debts owed to British merchants, from whom the Americans were once again eager to borrow. Loyalists lacked the lobbying clout of the merchants, and by 1802 Britain's negotiators had clearly grown bored with that issue. Large American cheques did not flow to dispossessed Loyalists. Still, I am impressed with the Congressional Research Service. I can't help reflecting how a lowly M.P. cadges bits of advice from sources like me, while a great American research machine revs up like a NASA booster rocket for Senator Helms.

While I am absorbing arcane details of American diplomatic history circa 1800, Godfrey-Milliken proves it is far from being the one-day amusement I had expected. The international press loves it. Godfrey goes on the BBC World Service and National Public Radio. *Harper's Magazine* and "60 Minutes" and the *Wall Street Journal* pick it up. In London, *The Independent* runs an arch piece about Sir Peter Johnson, baronet and descendant of the loyalist laird of the Mohawk Valley, who says he's ready to accept his piece of the United States. In July I had understood there would be little more to "Godfrey-Milliken" than a press conference, but in September it becomes a draft bill, which gets first reading in the House of Commons in October.

Also in October, I deliver on a commitment, made long before "Godfrey-Milliken", to talk about the Loyalists to a course on Canadian-American relations being run by Learning Unlimited, a seniors' group in the Toronto suburb of Etobicoke.

## "ENCOUNTERS WITH HISTORY" 1996 FINALIST

### The Treasure Hunt

Patricia Porter
(Belleville, Ontario)

*Stephen Leacock and Stevie.*

I think the parties at the Leacock's were especially fun because Stevie's Daddy had an imagination far better than any story book. He held us spellbound in true Stephen Leacock fashion; we believed it all.

This particular hot summer day, six of us sat on the grass, mesmerized by a tale Stevie's Daddy was telling. He told of a buried treasure that had never been found and a map showing its whereabouts. He had acquired the map through a dangerous encounter with some pretty scary bandits. Six little people sat enthralled, eyes wide open, mouths too, as Stevie's Daddy's seductive, drawling voice captured our imaginations.

Then, would you believe it, this dear man gave us the map. We searched for that treasure for what seemed like hours. Indeed we would have given up had Stevie, who was custodian of the map, not urged us on. He assured us the treasure was well worth the hunt.

And then we found it. It was under a pile of sticks and leaves; a real treasure chest, just like the ones in story books. That story about the bandits and the map had to be real. Silently we opened the chest. It was filled with jewellery, chocolate bars, pop, a rabbit's foot and an empty bottle of milk of magnesia. We sat on the ground munching chocolate bars and slurping orange pop. It had been a wonderful day.

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**ad in this issue.**

Godfrey and Milliken and their bill have just been on the front page of *The Globe and Mail*. I mention them in my introduction, and the immediate wave of knowing laughter and applause finally convinces me that this little spoof really has touched something about Canadians, Americans, and history.

Eventually I drop by Godfrey's North Toronto constituency office to look through his correspondence and clippings and to enquire about his take on the meaning of Godfrey-Milliken.

The clipping file demonstrates that Americans and Canadians have taken the story rather differently. To my surprise, Godfrey-Milliken coverage in the United States was not only widespread but mostly favourable. Many of the American pieces got both the joke and the point. Worldwide dislike of Helms-Burton stems from its contempt for the international-law convention on "extra-territoriality" (which means, in effect, that one nation doesn't try to impose its laws upon another). American opinion, it seems, is far from unanimous on at least the means adopted by Helms's anti-Cuba crusade, and Godfrey-Milliken became part of that domestic debate. On "60 Minutes", Morley Safer encourages Godfrey's satire and gets very tough on Congressman Burton and a hapless State Department official who struggle to keep the focus on Fidel Castro. Even the *Miami Herald*, which must be attuned to the Cuban exile community of south Florida, notes Godfrey-Milliken as an example of how American allies view Helms-Burton. "The loser will be the U.S." concludes its editorial.

"It's as silly – or serious – as Helms-Burton," Godfrey is quoted as saying about his bill, and many American commentators seem glad to have the chance to make the same point. Allan Fotheringham observes in a column that Godfrey and Milliken have been more effective than all the normal-channels diplomatic protests Canada made about Helms-Burton. (Senator Helms, however, was re-elected in November.) "To attract American interest, you have to make the story about Americans," is the lesson Godfrey draws.

From Canadians, meanwhile, Godfrey has compiled a heap of letters from Loyalist descendants eager to be part of the Godfrey-Milliken land rush. "Please forward to me as much of the U.S.A. as possible (I like the warm parts best)," reads one. "It is most heartening to know that some in this infernal country have retained a sense of the ridiculous," says another.

Godfrey-Milliken also brought back those odd and awkward ancestors, the Loyalists. In recent years, Loyalist history has demonstrated very successfully that the Loyalists, far from being 40,000 tea-drinking Boston Brahmins, were a socially, ethnically – and politically – mixed group. That message, however, by pricking the notion that the Loyalist migration endowed Canada inevitably and forever with deference, monarchism, and colonialism, has raised the question of what legacy, if any, they did leave Canadian history. "We are under pressure about identity," muses Godfrey. "If English Canada were a distinct society, what would it be?"

Not American, for a start. Godfrey notes that his older, more traditional constituents seemed particularly supportive of Godfrey-Milliken and, answering his own question about English-Canadian distinctiveness, suggests "it would be one that has not surrendered to U.S. ways, one where an alternate view of North American life still continues, one that recalls that the American Revolution created two new nations in North America."

Many Canadians, however, seem as much as anything to have appreciated the insertion of a historical reference, even a joking one, into contemporary argument, simply as a validation of Canadian experience and history. "Canadians," concludes Godfrey, "liked Godfrey-Milliken because it was funny. And because it was not anti-American but *Un-American*".

***Godfrey-Milliken, a private members' bill, is unlikely ever to be passed into law. As a story, however, its fortunes remain tied to American decisions on the future of Helms-Burton, which is indeed law. MP Godfrey invites electronic browsing of the Godfrey-Milliken material on his web site: www.johngodfrey.org***

# THE SOCIETY

## Canada's National History Society
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## Canadian History 1995-1996

### Recipient

***Charles Hou***
teaches at Burnaby South Secondary School in British Columbia. One of the highlights of his career is the Begbie contest, a bilingual provincial Canadian history quiz for grade 11 students. Charles has published extensively in Social Studies journals and has co-authored two Canadian history books. He is also on the executive of the British Columbia Social Studies Teachers' Association. In his leisure time, Charles takes his students on overnight hikes on historic trails. He has won numerous awards for history projects and student-produced films.

### Finalists

***Joan Andersen***
teaches Inuit and Settler-ancestry students at J.C. Erhardt Memorial School in Makkovik, Newfoundland. Joan uses a wide range of teaching methodologies to generate excitement and facilitate learning. Her fresh and innovative approach is exemplified by the play "A Trip Through Time", that her students created. Through the process of researching, writing and performing the play at the 20th Labrador Creative Arts Festival, her students experienced their community history.

***Dr. Paul Bennett***
teaches at Upper Canada College in Toronto, Ontario. His career has been marked by many achievements. Paul responded to Canada's national crisis by initiating the UCC Destiny/Destin Canada Committee, a student group that established a national Student Forum and Constituent Assembly on Canada's future in 1991. The group also organized a forum on Quebec-Canada relations in 1994, and two five-day Referendum observer missions to Quebec in 1992 and 1995. Paul has authored three nationally recognized Canadian history textbooks and has created other innovative Canadian history projects.

***Ed Caissie***
taught at Minto Elementary Junior High, New Brunswick. In order to motivate twelve "at-risk" students, he developed a local history unit called the New Brunswick Internment Camp Project which involved researching and documenting the camp's history. This included three stages: creating a model of the Minto-Ripples Internment Camp; starting a museum with artifacts that had been buried at the site or donated from people in the community; and, interviewing people who were connected with the camp. Ed Caissie and his students have received provincial and national awards and grants for their work with the project.

***Linda Dodge & Janet McKinney***
teach grades 5 and 6 at Glen Falls School in Saint John, New Brunswick. They created and implemented the "Early Saint John History Unit and Living Loyalist Museum". This project involves over 60 students who learn about Natives, explorers, Acadians and Loyalists through role-playing and experiencing everyday life in the late 1700s. Candle, rope, and soap making; weaving; apple drying; wood carving and baking are but a few of the heritage life skills learned by the students. Janet and Linda have received an award for their innovative teaching approach.

***Raymond Duchesne***
teaches at L'école Secondaire Roger Comtois in Loretteville, Quebec. He has created many curriculum documents, student self-evaluations, simulations, textbooks and historic rallies. He has also published a learning guide, *Histoire du Québec et du Canada* for secondary 4 (grade 10) history students that is widely used across the province. Raymond is considered the regional resource person for learning techniques and teaching materials in his subject area, Quebec and Canadian history.

***Geoff Irvine***
teaches at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School in Orleans, Ontario. He and his students develop multimedia applications for Canadian history. Students use information technology to produce historical portfolios, newspapers, Internet web pages and videos. Geoff uses this technology to share information and communicate with students, parents and colleagues. Last year, his class assembled a museum of Canadian history on the World Wide Web. This year's plan involves a Canada-wide World Wide Web site of Canadian heroes gathered by students across the country.

***Ted Palmer*** teaches at Caribou Hills Secondary School in Burnaby, British Columbia. Ted is known for the clever use of primary source material in his history classes. He regularly transforms his classroom into a gallery of photographs and historic documents for student viewing and commentary. He has developed simulation games focussing on Canadian Aboriginal studies. These and other projects like exchange visits, Pioneer Canada Fairs, the Canadian Aid Simulation and the Canada Japan multimedia project, encourage a creative way to link the past with the present.

***Marian Reimer*** teaches at Connaught Public School in St. Catharines, Ontario. Marian strives to create a stimulating learning environment and is very active in and out of the classroom. Some of her students are deemed exceptional and require program modifications. To address this challenge she has developed and taught many integrated Canadian history units such as "The Underground to Canada" novel study, "Canadian Sports Heroes" and "Canadian Native Peoples". She has co-authored several curriculum documents including a resource book to be used with "Cross-Country Canada", a computer simulation program focussing on Canadian geography.

***Lloyd Soloman*** teaches at Souris Regional High School in Prince Edward Island. He designed a senior high school course, the "History of P.E.I." to bridge a gap between community and school. He brought a "mini archives" to Souris that provided his students with primary sources to manipulate, investigate and interpret. Lloyd takes students from the formal classroom into non-traditional learning environments in the community such as the salt marshes and dikes of the Acadians, prehistoric Indian burial sites and farm dumps to investigate pioneer life. As a result of Lloyd's efforts, Souris Regional High School acts as a central location for education in Eastern P.E.I.

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***Kaye Steward, Wally Diefenthaler, and Gail Sobat***

team teach Native Awareness at Bellerose Composite High School in St. Albert, Alberta. The group developed a Canadian history interdisciplinary unit called the "Legacy Project" that combines a resource-based approach with experiential learning. This six-week project involves students in a series of theme-related days that culminate in a 3-day stay at the Tsuu T'ina Reserve near Calgary. At the reserve, the Tsuu T'ina youth and elders introduce students to traditional Native customs and challenge them to investigate Native stereotypes. The "Legacy Project" has received much recognition.

***Joe Tersigni*** teaches at Our Lady of Lourdes in Guelph, Ontario. Joe initiated and developed The Forum, a national student summit bringing together youth from across Canada in debate over Canada's future. This event, managed entirely by students, raises interest and awareness of the challenges facing Canada today. Panel discussions have featured prominent Canadian leaders and politicians. Keynote speakers have ranged from prime ministers, and premiers, to Native leaders and renowned journalists. Joe had also published numerous articles and has been involved in several Canadian Constitution programs for TVOntario. He has won many awards for his teaching of Canadian history.


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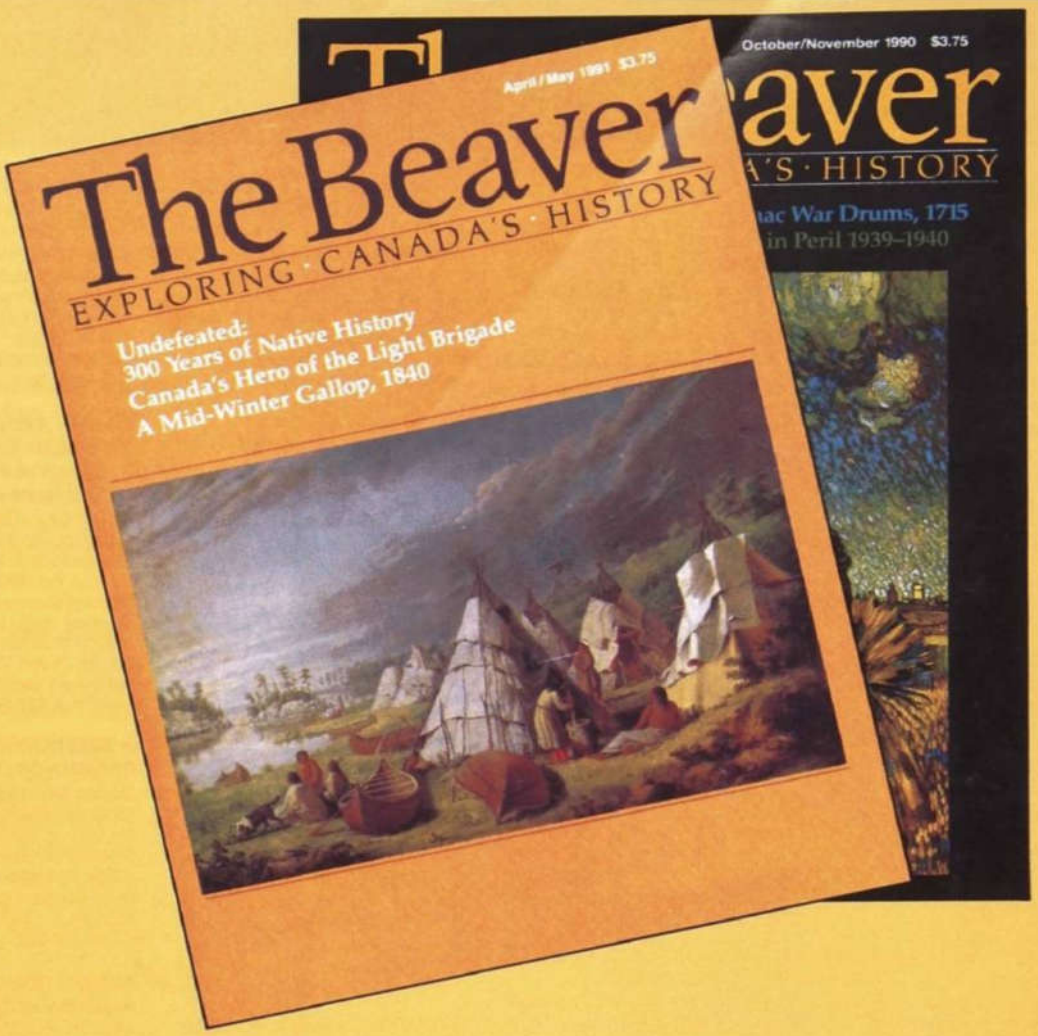


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